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BOOK OF DEVOTIONS

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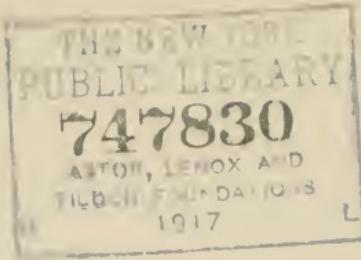
BOOK OF DEVOTIONS

DEVOTIONAL ADDRESSES DELIVERED
BY THE BISHOPS DURING THE
SESSIONS OF THE GENERAL CON-
FERENCE OF THE METHODIST
EPISCOPAL CHURCH, SARATOGA
SPRINGS, NEW YORK, MAY, 1916



THE METHODIST BOOK CONCERN
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THE METHODIST BOOK CONCERN

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FOREWORD

THE addresses here gathered together were heard with deep interest by the members of the General Conference and by the large number of visitors constantly in attendance at the morning devotional services. The demand for their preservation in permanent form was widespread and insistent. It is not too much to say that the fine spirit of brotherliness and Christian forbearance that characterized the General Conference of 1916 was due in large measure to the influence of these morning messages from our Bishops. In these pages will be found food for the nourishing and strengthening of the life of the spirit.

August 2, 1916.

BISHOP EARL CRANSTON

THE Bishop read 1 Pet. 5. 1-6, and spoke as follows:

The lesson offers a most timely and pertinent injunction: "Yea, all of you gird yourselves with humility, to serve one another."

Possibly some of us still carry our childhood conception of pride, and more of us the popular contempt for its opposite—humility. With most of us surely there is a call for a better understanding of the spiritual meaning of these two words.

Doubtless our youthful definition of pride was suggested by the vanity of an overdressed playmate, or the high-headedness of purse-proud neighbors. How hotly we resented such assumptions of superiority based on appearance or money! I knew a boy about my own size and age who, when the school was called upon for Scripture quotations, put a vicious emphasis on the text,

*Pride goeth before destruction,
And an haughty spirit before a fall,*

spoken with a definite direction of his eyes. But pride of clothes or money or position is only

the rudimentary expression of this ugly trait of human nature. It goes deeper than one's clothes and claims far more than money can buy. As used in the Bible, pride is the chief barrier to God's advent into the soul and his reign over human affairs. From Satan to the last victim of his wiles, pride is the gatekeeper against God. Seen in its biblical examples, it held the jealousy of Cain, the obstinacy of Pharaoh, the hatred of King Saul for David, the apostasy of Israel's later kings, the rebelliousness of Absalom, the persecutions of the prophets, the cruelties of Herod, and the rejection and crucifixion of Christ, as well as the defiance of God by pagan rulers, from Egypt to Rome. In this brief indictment we have arrogance, jealousy, hate, falsehood, obstinacy, over-sensitiveness, superciliousness, rebelliousness, ingratitude, blasphemy, cruelty, murder, and treason, all springing directly from the self-conceit, the self-will, the self-love, the self-exaltation comprehended in the one word *pride*. Well might the apostle say, "God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble," "all of you gird yourselves with humility." And he nobly exemplifies his own admonition. So far from claiming primacy in the college of the apostles, Peter modestly calls himself a "fellow elder" among his brethren in the ministry. He is even careful to base his contemplated admoni-

tions to other elders, not upon any apostolic authority, but on the simple fact that he had been "*a witness of the sufferings of Christ*," including, of course, the meekness of the Son of God under insult and outrage. It is from Christ's example that Peter draws his exhortation to humility, on the part of all who in Christ's name exercise authority in the Church, resting his own distinction and expectation, not in his apostolic commission, but in the assurance that he was "also a partaker in the glory to be revealed," as the outcome of sufferings endured in the spirit of his Lord. His method with himself leaves no countenance for the self-assertion that so often attaches to official prerogative, even in the Church of God. The elders are to "tend the flock, not of constraint but willingly, with a ready mind"—a mind alert to every need of the flock and to the will of God; but they are not "to lord it over the charge allotted to them." They are to rule rather by making themselves "examples to the flock." Here prelatical assumption dies and the true apostleship appears. Priesthood gives place to sympathetic communion with sorrow and weakness. The priest becomes the sacrifice upon the altar, after the Lord's example.

The older translation read—"be clothed with humility." The new goes beyond that. There is

a difference between a garment passively worn and a *girding* for special service or achievement. Yet, we are constrained to ask how, but for the example of Christ, could the world ever have associated humility with conquest or with personal glory and universal empire?

Hear it again:

“Yea, all of you, *gird yourselves with humility*,”—not for abasement, but “*to serve one another*” [italics author’s]. In our accepted revelation of God does not Jesus Christ bear eternal witness that all the powers of the Godhead are for service at the call of human need and reverent faith? This is the most tremendous truth the soul of man can dwell upon. We may never compass its guarantees for time or for eternity, but we simply *must* adjust our thought and conduct to its underlying law of spiritual life and destiny, or face the ultimate disillusionment of all self-centered souls. That underlying law is that spiritual satisfaction inheres neither in personal wisdom nor resources, nor in official prerogatives, but in voluntary ministries that find their abundant reward in making others stronger and wiser and richer and better. If that be true of God, it must be true of man. Gird yourselves with humility—in order to serve. That is reason enough for a Christlike man or woman. It is not a process of self-abasement, nor of self-efface-

ment, but of *self-adjustment* to the highest function of our being—serving one another, even as Christ emptied himself, humbled himself and became obedient to death to serve all mankind. So far from being a weakness, Christian humility is the finest expression of perfect spiritual poise. It is not only the armor of the soul invulnerable but reveals the highest discipline of faith and love, and hence the utmost of spiritual preparedness for Christlike work. Let us gird ourselves with humility—*to serve one another*—during these testing days in which we are to be tried—some of us by fire. It is not easy to value oneself fairly. What we conveniently call self-respect is very often a feeling closely akin to pride. There is a commendable self-respect, but it is never obtrusive in expression nor competitive in action.

It is defensive rather than aggressive. It arms one inwardly rather than outwardly. The friction of life as well as the evils of human government are due mainly to selfishness, and that is the root of pride. As individuals we cannot be too watchful for the sproutings of this obnoxious sin. And even in our representative capacity are we not liable to speak with overconfidence for the Methodist Episcopal Church? When one says the church will not approve this or that action or policy, is there not a suggestion of “great

swelling words of vanity" as to the extent of one's knowledge or the infallibility of one's judgment?

Even after General Conference has voted, the church does not always approve its judgment; and then what Methodism finally and formally votes may not be the mind of the divine Head of the one church of God. Christ alone can speak for the church—which is his body. The men on this platform, who for ten or twenty years have had opportunity to know the Methodist Episcopal Church in all its varied interests and geographical extent, and who administer its affairs, ought to know more of the mind of its people called Methodists than secular observers, or even localized officials may know; and yet even their counsel falls to the ground by a majority of a few votes often unintelligently cast. But how given we all are to confident speech as to "the voice of the church!"

In the great matter before us here it will be safer for us to seek the mind of Christ in the spirit of our action than to assume to know what may or may not be the truth, concerning any subject of legislation or judicial decision.

The girding with humility—to serve one another, is the best fundamental preparation for serving God and the church, as well as our best individual defense under reverses and disappointments.

BISHOP JOSEPH F. BERRY

BISHOP BERRY spoke as follows:

Some time ago I attended a Monday preachers' meeting. The theme of the essay of the morning described the temptations which come to a minister. The brother who read the paper mentioned some six or seven peculiar temptations. In the discussion which followed as many more were named by the speakers. I listened with great interest. When I left the room I said to myself, "After all, the brethren have not indicated the chief temptation to the minister, and the Sunday school teacher, and the worker in any department of church life."

Brethren, it seems to me that the chief temptation which we meet in our work every day is the temptation to *mere professionalism*.

I have a friend who is an eminent surgeon. His whole practice is that of surgery. He goes to the hospital every morning, and has long hours of sawing, cutting, stitching, cleansing—all of the days of the week. One day I said to him: "Doctor, I do not see how you can be a surgeon, and see these people come in one after another and submit themselves to the knife. You see

their white, drawn faces, and their dread, and witness the anxiety of their friends. I should think you would be so depressed that life would lose all of its joy, and you would be the most unhappy man in the city."

But the surgeon turned to me and laughed in my face, and said: "Why do you feel that way? I never thought of that. I am as happy as any one I know. I operate upon these poor people as a professional. I saw off a limb as a carpenter saws a board. I go through the routine of my professional life in the spirit of a mechanic. That is my business, that is my profession, and I could not allow it to get into my heart. If I sympathized unduly with these people, it would disqualify me for the service I must render them. I do it as a professional."

Years ago, when I was a young pastor, I had a great many funerals, and as the cemetery was some distance from the village I had to ride out very often with the undertaker in his carriage. On the way out to the cemetery and back we would talk about one thing and another, and I remember I turned to him once and said, "I do not see how you can be an undertaker. I could not be an undertaker. Here you are called to the homes of people who are sadly bereaved. You hear the moans and cries of afflicted friends. You go to the funerals day after day, and pass

through these dark hours. I should think you would be living in distress all the time, and that you would be sorrowing from morning until night. I could not be an undertaker."

He looked at me and a smile came into his face, and he said: "Why, do I appear to you like a very sad and melancholy man? Is there anybody in the village that seems to be happier than I am? I am an undertaker by profession, and I do my work in a professional spirit. I could not allow the sorrows of other people to get into my heart. I go through them day after day, and they affect me not. I could not allow them to. It would disqualify me for my work."

Brethren of the ministry, and brethren of the laity, I think it is fearfully possible that we may become so accustomed to our tasks that we will do our Christian service in a mere professional way, going through the form of the service when it has comparatively little grip on our hearts. One of the greatest bishops of our church told me, after he had been in his office for many years, that he never went over to the church on Sunday afternoon to ordain a class of deacons or elders, without first going into his room and getting down on his knees, and asking God to freshen up that ritualistic service that it might be as real to him as it was when he began his work as a bishop. He said he had become so familiar

with it, it was so much like routine, that very much of the life and power of it had faded away.

One of the best district superintendents that ever met with me in a Cabinet, told me when he was stepping out of his office that the one thing that he regretted most in his experience in his district work was that that precious ritualistic service of the sacrament of the Lord's Supper did not mean to him what it once had meant. He had become so familiar with it, he had read it, and read it, and read it all over his district during the years, that the meaning of it had faded out, and it did not grip his heart as it had gripped his heart in the beginning. Brethren, it is possible for us to get fatally calloused in our service, to become habituated to public prayer and family prayers. It is possible to become so accustomed to reading the Word, and even to preaching the Word, that we grow formal and professional, and the meaning of the Word, the power of the Word, the grip of the Word goes out of our hearts and out of our lives. It seems to me that every minister, every Sunday school teacher, every man or woman who is doing any form of Christian service, should pray to God every day that the Holy Spirit may keep these things real, significant, fresh and powerful in their hearts and deliver them from the peril of mere professionalism in the service which we

render to Jesus Christ our Lord. God will answer that prayer. He will keep our experience fresh, genuine and true.

I am perfectly sure that many sincere and noble Christians are in danger through the peril I have indicated. It is simply disastrous to drop into the ruts—to maintain the outward form without the inward reality. Words are hollow unless they have real conviction behind them. We are not a ritualistic church, and it may be admitted that we are in less danger of soulless formality than some others. But even the informality of our style will not save us. Let us pray this day that we may be lifted out of mere technical faith and service, out of the routine of mere professional service, the routine of that which is trite and mechanical, into a genuine, vital, intense, and passionate love to God and our impelling mission!

BISHOP JOHN W. HAMILTON

BISHOP HAMILTON, quoting 2 Cor. 6. 1, "We then, as workers together with him, beseech you also that ye receive not the grace of God in vain," spoke as follows:

The supreme duty of every man is to be the saviour of his fellow man. "You must live for another," said Seneca, "if you wish to live for yourself." Mr. Wesley said to his preachers, "You have nothing to do but to save souls; therefore, spend and be spent in this work, and go always not only to those that want you but to those that want you most." There is a significance in the identity of every man. No man since Adam has even the face of another man. It was only in the imagination that there could be found the fiction of a Comedy of Errors. Such distinction of identity affords opportunity for voluntary dependence. "The race of mankind would perish did they cease to aid each other." "For better and for worse character is infectious. . . . Those who will dare all, give all, bear all, have the power to transform and recreate the whole life and character of other men." Every man has his congregation of men or of one man

waiting for his ministry, who may not be saved unless that man is his saviour. Now, there is a danger of making this ministry exceptional and vocational, of turning over to a class the work of saving men. This has been the prevailing temptation of the church in all ages—to distinguish a class of ministers, of priests, Levites, preachers of righteousness, who should do all the work of the ministry, the saving of dying men. This is not the order of the gospel. It is not the order of the Christian Church in its history. Every disciple was a preacher of righteousness in the beginning. The first preacher after the resurrection was a woman. God has not intended that his work in this world should be done only by the preacher. The commission is to all men everywhere. “Ye are God’s husbandry”—that good old Anglo-Saxon word means nothing less than “business”—“Ye are God’s business”; the only business he has in this world with which he has promised by the assistance of the Holy Spirit to save the world. No layman should excuse himself from his obligation and from his responsibility. The General Conference, which is in danger of doing a great many unwise things, did an unscriptural thing when it forbade the layman to be preacher and put it into the hands of the ministers to deny him the right within his congregation by the aid of preach-

ing to save souls. Of course this work must be done with tact. That word "t-a-c-t" is the biggest word in the English, in the American, tongue. No man can in an unwise way do even a wise thing and be as successful as if it were done properly, wisely, righteously. Too many of us, thinking that we lack that manner of doing the work of God in this world, have betaken ourselves to apology and we have found that apology in timidity. O how many men say that because of temperamental timidity they cannot approach a fellowman in the interest of his soul! Well did Browning say, "How can a man love but what he yearns to help?" We can talk on every other subject. We can, if we have any self-interest, approach any man in behalf of ourselves; wherein can one find apology for his timidity, then, in trying to save dying men? It cannot be done by simply human inspiration and human effort, but God has given us the opportunity and power of prayer, by which we may overcome any timidity in doing his work. "It is matter of the commonest remark how a timid man who is in love will show courage or how an indolent one will show diligence." I have found that the most timid in the congregation where I have been pastor, under a whelm of inspiration coming from the Holy Spirit in the midst of revival, have found some

persons to whom they could go and preach the word of life. Brethren, it is not so much temperamental timidity as it is habitual timidity, a cultivation of what we think is temperamental timidity until we have made ourselves moral, religious, and spiritual cowards. Now, it is no more creditable to a man to be a coward in the Church of God than it is in the service of his country; and I therefore call on you this morning to feel this responsibility, this obligation, and to remember that no matter how pressing may be all the earthly cares, all the duties, you are here, as Mr. Wesley said, for no other purpose than to save your dying fellow man. There is no room for apology in seeking release from saving drowning men. Whether inconspicuous or inconsiderable, obligation holds both responsible. Peril is imperative, even though it were death for death. It is the plea of selfishness or insincerity only to say as Pope has said,—“I was not born for courts or great affairs; I pay my debts, believe and say my prayers.” It is “persistency which attracts confidence more than talents and accomplishments.” I know, sometimes there is liability of an unwise man, an unfitted man, going to the wrong person, doing even damage. But I have known more good coming in God’s service, in doing his work, even in an unwise way by his overruling of the unwisdom than I have ever

known of any great trouble arising from that course of procedure. You all remember the incident that has been told everywhere of a poor, simple fellow, feeling his responsibility when apparently he had little or none, who went to a skeptical man that had for the first time come into a religious meeting and asked him to give his heart to God. The man replied, "You idiot, go about your own business"; the simple man turned away and said, "Go to hell, then." But that was a "nail fastened by the Master of Assemblies," and the man went away saying, "I was the more ill-mannered first; and if a poor simpleton has called on me to be a good man and Christian man, and told me that if I do not accept the invitation I must go to hell, then I will think about it." The imagination sometimes proves to be a worse enemy than friend. He continued in his troubled state of mind until he hunted up some man who could show him how to escape the wrath that must come upon ungodly men.

But most people are more capable of great efforts than of continued perseverance. Now, a single incident in this connection, and I have done. Most of you know that I was born in a parsonage. My father was a pioneer Methodist preacher. My first charge was a circuit of thirteen preaching places, and I traveled forty miles around it, preaching on an average every

other day. My father taught me that it was my business never to lose an opportunity to impress every man or all men with my business.

I became very early an ardent and insistent seeker after the sure way of doing all the good I could to my fellow men. I was transferred from the Pittsburgh Conference to the New England Conference in my early ministry. At the first session of the New England Conference after my transfer, I was assigned with two other Methodist preachers (both of whom are where I think they will now know better, for they have been dead for years) for entertainment during the week to one of the homes of gaiety, society, in the city of Boston. The head of the house was very far from being reputable in his business—a leading attorney who was debarred afterward for some of his practices. We sat down to the table the first day with embarrassment. There was no call whatever for any religious recognition. At no time was there given us an opportunity, much less invitation, to pray. I said to those brethren, after the second or third day, "We are Methodist preachers. We are called of God to this work at least of praying a little, and I wonder if it would not be appropriate for some one of us to offer to pray with the family." They both excused themselves and said, "You know the reputation of this man, and he will insult us."

"Well," I said, "he may not."

As the week advanced, I said, "It is certainly the duty of one of you brethren, both of you being older than I am, to offer to pray in this house."

But both of them, I think under a bit of "temperamental timidity," put the matter off until after Sunday. I said, "Brethren, we will do violence to our calling unless we at least *offer* to pray."

"If you feel that way," they said, "you pray then."

I replied, "It is not modest of me, being the youngest; but if you do not offer to pray, I will."

So on the last morning I turned to this gentleman, our host, and, saying that we had been in the house for so long and we were Methodist preachers, asked if we should not pray with him and his family before we left; at the same time thanking him for all his courtesies. He flung his chair back instantly, and flying to the door, said: "You can pray with my wife all you want to. I don't need any praying. I am going to business."

Off he went. The good woman blushed, of course. But I said, "My sister, have you a Bible?"

"Certainly," she replied, and she went into a room and brought out that often-neglected big

parlor Bible, that possibly people of better professions indifferently leave there. In the best way I could, as a boy, I read the Scriptures, and prayed for that man and his wife. I never saw the man again until in the midst of the building of the People's Church, many years afterward. He was on the other side of the street as I was going by, when he called to me. He was talking with half a dozen young fellows who were jesting about something. When I came over to him he said, "I see you have had a scandal up in New Hampshire! There was another down in Connecticut, wasn't there?"

"Yes sir."

Then he called a certain man by name, whom some of you remember as having left this country between two days with a million dollars of other people's money. He said, "That man was a Methodist, wasn't he?"

"Yes."

"Well," said he, "how is it that about every scoundrel in this country turns out to be a Methodist. How do you account for it?"

I said, "There is no one in this country but Methodists, and if any one turns out a scoundrel, he has to be a Methodist."

Those young fellows standing by said, "This man has no manners. He has not introduced us to you. You are a clergyman, we take it. He

has no respect for any one. Come to dinner with us, and we will pay the bill."

That man took off his hat and said, "Respect! You think I have no respect! He is the only man that ever offered to pray in my house. I insulted him. And just the same he went on and prayed for me and my wife. Talk about respect or reverence! If I wake up in hell, I will respect him forever."

It may be I made a mistake! but God in his providence fastened that nail by the Master of Assemblies. Let us pray.

BISHOP WILLIAM F. McDOWELL

BISHOP McDOWELL read for the Scripture lesson Luke 4. 14-21, and spoke as follows:

There are two or three good ways of getting into this scene. You can get into it by the way of imagination first. By this way you will see a village congregation, a common group of worshippers, respectful, reverent, and not very expectant, not looking for any very mighty thing to happen before their eyes, which is one of the deadliest conditions that ever falls upon a congregation. One of their neighbors' sons stands up and reads a familiar word out of the greatest literature in existence. And he reads it in such fashion that all at once this congregation is aroused; but not aroused fully, only aroused to the point of curiosity and to a kind of a wonder that any such thing as this could have happened to one of their neighbors' sons. For we are never quite sure that God can do great things in our congregation or through our neighbors' children.

Or you can come to it by way of emphasis. This word of Isaiah is one of the great words in all literature, religious or secular. It had become one of the most pathetic and unlovely things in

this world, namely, a dead letter. I do not doubt that those in customary charge of the synagogue services not only could but did read it in such fashion that nobody's pulses beat any the faster, nobody's heart hammered until he could hardly endure it, while the customary reading went on. But all at once a wonderful thing happened. This fine young Person stood up and took this letter that had become in their minds and hearts a dead letter, put the emphasis on the personal terms, and all at once it became a living word before their eyes. "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me. . . . This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears." O, brothers beloved, it is a great thing when the greatest word in all the world becomes quick and living again in the hands of the preacher and before a congregation.

But in any view of the scene, whether you approach it by way of imagination, or by way of emphasis, or by any other way, you come upon one of the most significant and meaningful things that ever happens in our world—the spectacle of a person interpreting his life, its spirit, the sources of its power, its intentions, its relations, all that he intends to be and do. And you could well take off your shoes in the presence of this spectacle, for this is holy ground.

Now, look at it a moment in that view of it. You would know pretty well what kind of a per-

son this Person is going to be, from this literature that he takes upon his lips as he begins his career. You would know pretty well what kind of person this Person is going to be, from the emphasis he puts upon the personal terms in this matchless utterance. But let me analyze it just a little bit more closely than that, and say that Jesus interpreted his life and its purposes and its relations and its intentions, under the highest influences then or now in existence. In the Spirit, in the synagogue, in the noble utterance of the noblest literature, in the presence of the best people there were, at his best, at his own highest level, he made this interpretation. All our plans, all our legislation, all our ambitions, should emerge at life's highest levels rather than at any lower levels. All legislation should express our best life, so that it will create a better life than that which it expresses. All our purposes should emerge when we are at our best.

Brothers, a good many of you men have sons and daughters who under the influence of a college revival, or stirred mightily by the spirit of God in some other way, at some other time, or under the thrill of missionary appeal, or in the face of some heroic character, or stirred by some thrilling biography, have felt their own hearts throbbing with a new vigor, their throats clutch with choking sensation, and under the influence

of these feelings, emotions, and influences they have felt that they ought to give themselves directly and distinctly and immediately to God's service, for the ministry or for missionary service. Then some one has said: "Be careful now. Do not reach the supreme decision about your life until you have cooled off." Maybe you said it to your own child. How many men are going through the world to-day with the mountain glory all off their lives, because in the hour of high experience somebody told them to choke their emotions and their feelings and to dim their vision.

Your emotions, your ambitions, your sons' ambitions, your daughters' ambitions, their purposes for their lives, our purposes for our lives and theirs, ought all to emerge when the Spirit is running in full, majestic, and, if you please, well nigh irresistible tide through our lives. That is the first thing.

The second thing is like unto it. Jesus interpreted his life not only at life's highest levels, he interpreted it with a keen and overwhelming sense of the world's awful, urgent and desperate need. There are passages in this New Testament that one can hardly read, they grip the soul so. Every once in a while a great utterance like this, that we supposed we perfectly understood suddenly breaks out with a new meaning, the like of which we have not dreamed of before.

Always there is the world's need before the man who is in the Spirit of God. Always the blind are craving sight, always the deaf are eager to hear, always the prisoners are struggling and striving and longing for liberty, always the "acceptable year of the Lord" waits! Always! As I read these words this morning, did you not get a new vision of what they must mean this morning to Jesus, what they must mean to you and to me and to the Church of Jesus, in view of the new blindness in the world, the new bondage in the world, the new deafness in the world, and the new year that does not look like the "acceptable year of the Lord" at all?

O the world thinks it needs so many things! It thinks it needs more territory, it thinks it needs more money, it thinks it needs a thousand things. And the world needs what that other preacher, that other layman, that simple Son of God, and Son of man, meant when he stood there and tied up the gift of the Spirit with the healing of the hurt of the world.

A little while ago I was at one of our oldest and largest universities, and after speaking, a little company of professors and students gathered in an informal way and sat down for conversation. And in the usual fashion in a General Conference year, they began at once to ask me the conventional questions—"Who will be elected

bishops? What great subjects and issues will be before the Conference?" I suppose they expected that I would tell them who would be elected bishops. There is a certain comfort in the possession of certain kinds of ignorance; and I had very great comfort because my ignorance upon that particular subject was so large and undisturbed. I could not speak to them, brothers, and did not speak to them, about the matters of petty legislation, about the matters even of important legislation, that will come before this body. I do not look upon any of these matters as unimportant. So after a few words of mere formality about it I said to them what I now say to you: "The great question before the General Conference, the great question before every man and woman in the General Conference, is the question whether the General Conference will so interpret its own life in the Spirit, at the highest levels, in the face of the world's present desperate needs, that we shall please God by our being throughout May in Saratoga."

I do not know what you are going to do with reference to certain matters that will come before you. I am not anxious about it. But, brothers, my great anxiety this morning and every morning and every day is and has been and will be that somehow, day by day through all these days, we and our whole church may be

able to stand up and say in truth, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to give to mankind its chance in Jesus Christ." It does not matter much what else we do, if this shall not happen. And if this happens, all will be well for us and the world. May the old world become a living world again to-day! May the old scene be repeated again to-day until here, and here, and here, and everywhere, we can stand up and say, "This day, this day, is this Scripture fulfilled in the ears of the world." Let us pray.

Almighty God, pour thy Spirit upon us. Almighty God lead us hour by hour. Almighty God, guide us in the paths of thine own choosing. Almighty God, take our sons and our daughters, and use them to help thee heal the hurt of the world. For Jesus' sake. Amen.

BISHOP JAMES W. BASHFORD

ON the subject of "Christian Perfection" Bishop Bashford spoke as follows:

In the article on sanctification in Hastings' Dictionary of the Bible, Professor Bartlet, of Mansfield College, Oxford, maintains that while the soul may not claim sinlessness, nevertheless, through the atonement of Christ and the indwelling of the Spirit, it may reach a stage in which it maintains, continuously, unembarrassed fellowship with God. This is his conception of sanctification. It is good to find modern scholarship coming abreast of Wesley's conviction of such an experience as the clear teaching of the New Testament.

Paul writes, "Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus." Paul expresses the same great truth a second time in slightly different language. "I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do: forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth into those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high

calling of God in Christ Jesus. Let us therefore, as many as are perfect, be thus minded."

When so weighty a writer as Paul repeats a statement, we may rest assured that he deems the truth he is trying to convey exceedingly important. Summing up Paul's two-fold statement, he seems to be impressing upon his readers, first, that he has not reached perfection, but second, that he adopts sanctification or Christian perfection through Christ as his working plan of life.

There is an apparent verbal contradiction in Paul's statement. He says, "Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect," and he repeats the disclaimer in a slightly different form. But at the close of the passage he adds, "Let us therefore, as many as are perfect, be thus minded." When I first read this passage thoughtfully, I said, "There must be some fault in the translation; probably Paul does not use the same Greek word for 'perfect' in both cases." But on turning to the original I found that Paul does use exactly the same Greek word, first as a verb and second as the adjective, to express his conception of perfection. He is burdened in the utterance of a great truth, and in order to express this truth he crowds this word "perfect" full of meaning almost to the breaking point.

The explanation is this: Life is larger than

logic. Let one attempt to draw the line between the vegetable and the animal kingdoms. After he succeeds in drawing the line in accordance with logical principles he will find that the vegetable kingdom is often pressing over that line and getting into what he defined as the animal kingdom; and he will also find that the animal kingdom frequently drops a little below the definition of animalhood which he had written and appears in the vegetable kingdom. In a word, the logical definition does not separate the two kingdoms, because life is larger than logic. A similar phenomenon appears in spiritual experience; hence the apparent verbal contradiction.

Wesley tries to meet the difficulty by using the word "Christian," not to expand but to limit perfection. He uses this adjective in order to differentiate the perfection which he believes a Christian may experience in the present life from perfection in any absolute sense. In confirmation of Wesley's view you will find that persons experiencing the higher Christian life seem at times to drop a little below the line even of Christian perfection as defined by Wesley, and that some Christians not claiming or conscious of sanctification, are constantly pressing over the line of regeneration into this larger experience; life is larger than logic.

What does Paul mean by repeating his con-

fession of faith twice and filling the term he uses with meaning almost to bursting? He means that there is an experience beyond regeneration; that there is a larger, richer, deeper, fuller experience of Christ and the indwelling Spirit which he is eager for his readers to possess. We are making fine progress in this General Conference in devising plans and in arranging a program for the evangelization of the world and the Christianization of our social, our business, and our political life in the homeland. Can we deepen and broaden and enrich our spiritual life so that we shall gain the power to carry out our program? If so, we shall register a marvelous gain during the coming quadrennium. This increase of the spiritual life to such an extent as will enable the church to work all the machinery during the next four years is a part of our business in this General Conference. It is the great work which we ought to accomplish in these morning prayer meetings.

John goes beyond Paul in his apparent self-contradiction. He writes in his first Letter, "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." John apparently deems it dangerous for any man to esteem himself so perfect that he fails to repeat the Lord's petition, "Forgive us our debts." But in the same letter, a little further on, John adds,

"Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin, for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God." John thus says, "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves" and later adds, "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin." John, like Paul, apparently found the Christian life larger than logic and crammed words with meaning to the breaking point in his statement of the proneness even of the Christian at times toward sin and yet of the possibility always before the Christian to be kept from sin through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.

We find the same apparent contradiction in the words of Jesus, who says in the last verse of the fifth chapter of Matthew, "Ye therefore shall be perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect." But a little farther on, in the sixth chapter, he teaches us to say, "Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors." Here is the same logical *impasse*. Perfection after the pattern of God does not imply any sin, but Christ follows the promise of such perfection to us by the prayer in which he teaches us to cry out for forgiveness.

I never knew but one person professing sanctification who openly announced that she had ceased to use the petition for forgiveness. She said: "The Holy Spirit keeps me and I do not sin. Why should I ask Christ for forgiveness?"

Her failure duly to impress her husband, who was a Christian man, with the wisdom and necessity of the experience she professed, and her failure to bring her sons in the Christian life, might at least have led her to fear some sin of omission and so to repeat the petition for forgiveness. Such of our people as make any profession of sanctification are too wisely taught by Wesley for them to make this blunder and omit the petition for forgiveness.

Upon the contrary, I once asked one of the saintliest men I have ever known this question: "Have you ever fallen into condemnation since you professed sanctification?"

After a slight pause he replied in the affirmative.

I replied to him: "I would like to know how you differ from me. I thought you did not fall into condemnation."

After a further pause he said: "That is not quite the distinction between the sanctified and the regenerate. So far as my experience goes, the distinction, rather, is this: Before I experienced sanctification I recognized the proneness of my regenerate heart at times toward sin. My big temptation was impatience. I tried to quiet my conscience by saying impatience is my peculiar weakness. Hence, I expected loss of temper occasionally as an inevitable portion of

my earthly life and looked for deliverance only after I reached heaven. But the burden of sins of impatience, and of other accumulating sins, would often weigh upon my conscience as I came to the close of the year or to Passion Week. I would then wait upon God and plead for forgiveness and for deliverance, and God heard my prayer and the Holy Spirit graciously was given to me. The effects of the consciousness of forgiveness, and of the presence of the Spirit in my heart, usually appeared in my preaching; and my church experienced at these seasons of the year a gracious revival usually resulting in large additions to the membership."

This statement was not boasting upon the part of my friend. No year in his ministry ever passed without revivals, and he was called to the largest churches in his Conference, not wholly or chiefly because of his gifts as a preacher, but largely because of his spiritual power, even preceding his experience of Christian perfection. He then added in substance:

"When the change came I recognized that it was not God's plan at all that I should be sinning and repenting, sinning and repenting, but that God wished me to have the abiding fullness of the Spirit and through him constant deliverance from sin. I then adopted holiness as God's plan of life for me and as my daily program.

Formerly I had regarded it as an ideal to be realized in the next world. Now it became God's plan of life for me day by day. If," he added, "I fall into sin, or my heart moves toward sin, the Holy Spirit is very faithful and warns me very quickly, and the moment I realize that I am going wrong that instant I turn to God and ask for forgiveness, and as soon as I find opportunity I confess the sin and correct it with others who have been injured by my temper. Hence," he added, "ever since this experience I do not think I have remained under condemnation any time so long as a minute. Not that I have always avoided condemnation, not that I have ceased to repeat the petition for forgiveness, but I have accepted sanctification as my working plan of life; and God is so good and forgives me so readily when I turn to him in penitence that I live in uninterrupted fellowship with the Holy Spirit."

Brethren, is not such an experience as that possible to us all? Uninterrupted fellowship with God is practical sanctification. I am a little troubled when any man stands up in public and says, "I have reached perfection," even though he modifies it by using the phrase "Christian perfection." I do not remember a line in John Wesley's writings in which he distinctly makes this profession. But would to God that every

one of us would follow in the footsteps of the brother described above, as he followed in the footsteps of Paul, and say before the world, "Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect; but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus." The adoption of this goal as our daily aim, the acceptance of Christian perfection as our working plan of life, is Paul's desire for us all. "Let us therefore, as many as are perfect, be thus minded."

Professor Bartlet's phrase, "unembarrassed fellowship with God" seems to me a little too strong. Only Christ, the Sinless One, can look into the Father's face without the slightest embarrassment. But when an earthly son is full of affection and admiration for his earthly father, and is constantly striving to please the father and to follow in the father's footsteps, surely the fellowship between the two is not broken by an instant's failure on the son's part, which the boy did not fully intend to commit, which sprang in part from carelessness or lack of watchfulness or exuberance on the boy's part. If the moment the father reminds the boy of his error, or the moment he himself discovers it, his loyalty and love of his father conquer his pride and his evil desires, and the son turns immediately and cries to the father for forgiveness, the fellowship be-

tween the two is not even interrupted. God is infinitely wiser and more tender than any earthly father. If the instant we discover ourselves in any sin or in any neglect of duty, we turn to him for forgiveness and so far as possible correct the evil with those whom we have hurt, we may maintain uninterrupted fellowship with the Holy Spirit, and this is the New Testament doctrine of sanctification.

Wesley thought Methodism was raised up by God for the specific purpose of spreading scriptural holiness over the earth. But through imperfect interpretations of the doctrine, and still more through imperfect embodiments of it by those who profess it, and most of all through our own lack of faith and desire and our own failure in consecration, the experience is little preached, is seldom discussed in private, and is generally neglected. There are hidings of power in this experience which are essential to the larger tasks now confronting the church. In the language of Phillips Brooks: "Let us not seek tasks according to our strength, but strength according to our tasks." Hence, let us all this morning adopt Paul's program, "Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for

the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. Let us therefore, as many as are perfect, be thus minded."

Bishop Bashford offered prayer.

BISHOP WILLIAM BURT

BISHOP BURT spoke as follows:

“Master, we have toiled all the night, and have taken nothing: nevertheless at thy word I will let down the net” (Luke 5. 5).

A great multitude of people had assembled on the shore of the Sea of Galilee, attracted there by the presence of Jesus of Nazareth. There were two fishing boats on the beach and a company of humble fishermen washing and mending their nets.

The people so pressed against Jesus that he was unable to speak to them standing on the beach, hence he asked if he might use one of the boats from which to address the multitude. He requested Peter to push the boat off a little from the shore and then he spoke to the people as never man spake.

After he had finished speaking he would seal his words with an act of divine power, and at the same time reward the patient, faithful fishermen. So he ordered Peter to pull the boat out into deep water and to let down his net for a “draught of fishes.”

Peter and his fellow fishermen were tired. They

had been out all night and had caught nothing, and it was contrary to all reason and to all their previous experience as fishermen on that lake that if they were unable to catch any fish during the night there would be any hope of success in the day time.

But Simon answering said unto him, "Nevertheless at thy word I will let down the net." This was certainly a case of remarkable faith. These men were not yet very well acquainted with Jesus, since they had met him only on one or two occasions before this time. They had just been listening, however, to his wondrous words, and they felt the power and authority of his marvelous personality. Hence when Jesus commanded they were ready to obey, though what he told them to do was contrary to all their former experience.

There was something truly sublime in this act of obedience. By it Peter put himself at once into harmony with the divine will. He put himself, as it were, into gear with God's laws and plans in the universe, and he gave the best possible reason for his obedience—"Nevertheless at thy word I will let down the net."

At his word the vast machinery of the universe moves in wondrous order. The sun, moon, and stars obey him, and how glorious is the thought that man consciously and with his own free will

may bring himself into harmony with God and cooperate with him! Brothers, we may come into harmony with God, but only through that obedience which comes of faith.

The thing commanded may not always seem reasonable or probable from the human viewpoint, nevertheless without hesitation we obey. "Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you." There are many to-day who pretend to be the friends of Jesus but they do not trust or obey his word. O, for an unqualified and unhesitating obedience to the Master! Then all private interests and personal considerations will be merged into our efforts for the Kingdom.

The design or purpose of the miracle was two-fold. In the first place, it was to produce an immediate effect upon the disciples of Jesus, to deepen their faith in Him who had called them to be the representatives among men of his *power, faithfulness, and love.*

In the second place, it was prophetic. It was intended to yield inexhaustible comfort again and again amid the heavy cares and discouraging duties of all the years to come. How many times when the net has been drawn to the shore by weary arms and found to be empty the memory of this scene by the Sea of Galilee has revived the fainting hearts of Christ's toilers. The great

triumphs of the gospel have often been like the miraculous catch of fish, overpowering surprises after periods of seemingly useless fatigue. In the very crises of despair there has come an ingathering so wonderful that the nets have threatened to break and the boats to sink.

Many a time the lonely witness for Christ in the midst of heathen darkness, Romish superstitions and Jesuitical intrigues has quickened his flagging faith and courage by the remembrance of this scene on the shore of Gennesaret. Thank God for a faith that produces courage, patience, and obedience!

We, like the fishermen disciples, have often toiled all night without accomplishing much while others of swifter feet have outrun us. We have not succeeded in business as we had hoped. We have failed perhaps to obtain the one object of which we have dreamed and for which we have toiled all our lives.

Let us remember this morning that these words came from the lips of a hard-working man, who was tired and discouraged because he had worked all night to no profit. Nevertheless, at the command of Christ he was willing to try again. Therefore not because we consider the circumstances of to-day more favorable than those of yesterday, or the task less difficult, but at the word of Jesus let us push out into the

deep, away from the shore and let down the net. Simply take Jesus at his word and obey.

"Come ye after me," said Jesus, "and I will make you to become fishers of men." Our one business in life is to save souls. Christ came to weary toilers at the very moment when their own sagacity and skill had failed them, when they had abandoned their own efforts at least for the time as useless.

He did not discourage them by telling them that it was their own fault that they had caught nothing. He simply said, "Push out into the deep and let down the net." The same Master says to us this morning, "Go, preach, teach, live and personally work for the salvation of men, of society, of the world."

Brothers, a few days ago there was brought to us that magnificent paper on "World Conditions," and on Saturday we heard something about the conditions in our own country. These facts are simply overwhelming when we look at them from the human viewpoint; but do we not hear the voice of the Master saying to us, "Notwithstanding the difficulties, pull out into deep water, away from the shore, and let down the net for a draught." Thank God, the simple preaching of the gospel of the Christ was never meeting with more gracious results than now. We have every reason for obeying the Christ.

After long hours of apparently useless toil the disciples had resolved to go home. Suddenly a voice said, "Try again." Was there any reason why they should try again? It was the same lake, the same boats, and the same net. What made the difference? It was the realization of the presence of Jesus that made them win. Hast thou failed on life's sea? Try again with Jesus. There may be nothing else to bid thee try. The night may be just as dark, the waves may be as high, the boat may be as frail; but, brother, sister, try again with Jesus. That which he bids us do is the greatest, the sublimest work ever committed to mortals. O the privileges and the responsibilities of it!

What the Church of Jesus Christ needs to-day more than anything else is the conscious recognition of the presence of the living Christ, the very Christ of whom Paul said, "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life that I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." Do we have this consciousness of His presence? If we do then we will realize as we have never realized before our relation to our brother man.

A number of men were digging a ditch in one of our large cities. The shoring fell in and several of the men were buried beneath the dirt. A

crowd rushed to the spot and one man said to another who was carelessly looking on, "Bill, your brother is in there." What a difference that made! Off came his coat and he went to work to rescue his brother at the risk of his own life.

Rufus Choate while delivering an oration in Boston on the completion of a building for reforming boys said, "All the expense that you have put into this building would be more than compensated for if only one boy could be reformed."

One man remarked to another while they were walking away, "Did not Mr. Choate exaggerate when he made that statement?"

"No," the other replied, "not if it were my boy."

Brothers, we need to get closer to our brother man until we realize that every man is our brother and every boy our boy. We shall do this only in proportion as the spirit of the Christ possesses us.

BISHOP LUTHER B. WILSON

BISHOP WILSON spoke as follows (John 6. 1-14) :

It has been said that the miracles of Christ are also parables, and in the light of that suggestion we read this story. Looking across the centuries one sees that multitude, hungering, gathered about our Lord. With the hunger there would be the consciousness of weariness, the disposition to petulance, the tendency to magnify the discouraging circumstance, to look at even the common tasks of life as stern and the common relationships as unattractive. And that hungry multitude in the olden days is suggestive of the fact that in all the centuries the masses of the world have been and still are hungry—hungry of body, hungry of spirit, hungry for bread, hungry for love and fellowship. Then as one thinks of the disciples, of all men nearest to the Master, best qualified, as one would think, to interpret his mind and heart, one hears that strangely discouraging word, "Send them away." The thought, alas! is not unfamiliar. It is the quick way, as one might think, of ridding self of responsibility. To banish the problem is

sometimes easier than to solve it. To dismiss the congregation is easier than to feed it. "Send them away"—somewhere, anywhere.

We may be unwilling to voice the thought, but does it not find place in our minds? Even with those who have known in their own lives the power of Christ to satisfy, there has often been felt the temptation to send the multitude away because it was a multitude, and the conviction as to Christ's sufficiency for a single disciple, on a little group of believers did not seem to beget the conviction that he is able to satisfy also larger need. So it has happened again and again that we have looked to the leaders of human thought to satisfy the world's hunger: We have looked upon the promoters of a new democracy, or the founders of some new school of economics, or the representatives of human diplomacy to meet the burning needs of the world. Only the Christ who satisfies us, can really feed the multitude. As against the word of a too timid discipleship, "Send them away," we need to hear that other word, persuasive, potential, "Come unto me."

But the miracle sustains the character of a parable also in respect of this fact—Jesus Christ is ever seeking the help of men in the accomplishment of his great purpose. At Cana of Galilee, in preparation for the first miracle, he

bade the servants fill the water-pots with water. Not until they had done their part did he do his. At Bethany, when he would demonstrate his lordship over death, he bade the men who stood near the tomb of Lazarus to roll away the stone. Not until the stone is rolled away, does he say, "Come forth!" Here in the presence of this multitude he bids them seek the food for the satisfying of hunger. It may seem to us that the Christ of Galilee really needs this help given by men, or it may seem but as another evidence of his divine grace that he suffers men to help. However this may be, as we study the history of the olden days and review the events which have transpired since that time, it appears as a law of the spiritual world that men must be at work if Jesus Christ is to reveal his power and glory. As the evening shadows lengthen and the disciples make search for the necessary food, they can find but one basket, that which a fisher lad has brought—just one basket, with a few loaves and fishes. To some it would seem a mockery to bring this one little basket to Christ in a moment when the manifest need is so great. At such a time it is quite probable that the doubting disciple will magnify the discrepancy between the need and the supply, and hesitate to mention the scant store which has been found, but when the doubt is so far mastered that the fisher lad

is led to Jesus, then there is illustrated the great truth that in the hands of our Lord the little things are multiplied, and that it is never a question of our count or measure. The basket of our fisher lad with its five loaves and two small fishes will not go very far when the table is to be spread for the thousands if the disciples serve alone, but if our Master will but take the loaves and fishes, breathing his blessing as he breaks them, then may we with great confidence distribute the pieces, knowing that any multitude so fed shall certainly be satisfied. Saint Paul has written a great word in his letter to the Ephesians when, speaking of our Lord, he declares that he is "able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think." Able to do! It is not a question of how many baskets there are, how many loaves or how many fishes there are—He is "able to do," but the condition involved would seem to be this—that the basket with all it contains be handed over absolutely into the hands of Jesus Christ. It is the giving of the all that counts. I do not believe that it is possible for us to pile up gold enough on God's altar to secure the conversion of the world, the conversion of one city, the conversion of one soul, if the gold represents simply the ambitious desire to glorify men, or is offered to elicit from the world praise of any human policy or organiza-

tion. No measure of gold, no measure of intellectual force, no measure of personal influence, can effect the world's conversion if that which is offered for the task represents the spirit of calculation rather than the spirit of consecration; but if with absolute surrender the hearts and minds and stores of men be placed in those hands that were pierced, and which because they were pierced are worthy to hold and able to wield the scepter of power, then the kingdom of God shall indeed be drawing nigh, and we shall be seeing His glory as we have never before seen it. That is to say, we may have but a few loaves and a few fishes in our basket, and we want Jesus Christ in this twentieth century to accomplish once again the mighty miracle of his omnipotence and love. We dare not take anything out of the basket before we hand it to him. We hand it to him with whatever it has in it—every loaf, every fish—and the outcome is sure to disappoint our doubt and beget within us a joy unutterable. If this be our confidence and attitude, we shall be able to declare that never in the history of the world was there a day brighter with hope than to-day, never a day when the promises of God were more great and precious. Crowds are about us, hungry multitudes are everywhere, men are suffering and dying. Mourners go about the streets of all the cities, the skies are rent with

storm and the earth trembles beneath us, but the purposes of God are yet to ripen. The desert is yet to blossom. The night is sure to end and the morning cometh. If there be handed over to Jesus Christ these lives of ours in true and absolute devotion, if the littles and greats that we possess are laid upon the altar of God, there will be not only glad acceptance of the gift but there shall be likewise the multiplying of every gift in unexpected ways. Out of our consecration there shall be brought in an age of gladness such as men have never known before. Hugh Price Hughes, burdened with many cares, dominated by a great, holy passion, sang again and again to himself, "Thou, O Christ, art all I want," and I have heard that on the stone that marks his resting place those words are carved, "Thou, O Christ, art all I want." Let me but have Jesus Christ as mine and I shall be equal to the journey, the toil, equal to the worthy achievement, but that can be only as what we have and are, are yielded to him. It is as though while we are singing, "Thou, O Christ, art all I want," Jesus Christ is saying: "Thou, O toiler, art all I want. Give me thyself, just as thou art. Give me thy mind and heart, give me thy basket and thy store, and the Kingdom shall come and love's will be done."

This would seem to be the simple teaching of

the story. The thousands were seated in order on the grass, the Master blessed and broke the loaves and the fishes, the disciples served, and all were satisfied. It would seem as though the gathering of the twelve basketfuls of fragments had its chief significance as proof that all were satisfied—no little child sobbing with hunger, no tired mother fainting, no man in all the crowd sullen and dissatisfied, but the need of the hour fully met. We are thinking here of the call of the city, we are thinking of the need of the world across the seas, we are planning by the perfecting of human policies to make our ministry to men still more and more effective. Supplementing all as the condition of successful service, whether it be of us as individuals or whether it be of us as a great church, there must be that attitude of surrender to Jesus Christ, that dedication of self with all the measure of its power and possibility, absolutely to Jesus Christ. Brothers, let us give ourselves to him. So shall come great peace to our own hearts, a peace which shall pass all understanding; so shall there come great good to all the world, good unexampled; so shall there come great joy to Him whose we are and whom we love.

BISHOP WILLIAM F. ANDERSON

BISHOP ANDERSON read as the Scripture selection Psalm 46, and spoke as follows:

A good many years ago a good and great man gave utterance to one of the deepest regrets of his life in this language: "The fables men have made have filched away the time I had for thinking about God." And I fancy if we were entirely honest with ourselves, that many of us would have occasion to express the same regret. How strange it is that we think about everything, that we talk about everything, except the greatest of all things—about God!

For a little time this morning at the beginning of the day's session we are going to turn our thought toward God. We are going to think of him under the figure in which he is presented by the psalmist in this beautiful 46th Psalm. "God, our helper" is the thought which runs throughout the psalm from beginning to end, and in the time permitted for the message we shall give consideration to the question as to what manner of helper Almighty God is of the sons and daughters of men.

And if at the very beginning we were to pause for a moment to inquire touching the question of what it is that constitutes the true principle of helpfulness we should find, I am sure, that the truest and best way to help a man is to come close to that man. The missive that goes from afar may dry a tear and comfort an aching heart. The help that goes by the hand of a proxy or agent, may meet a very important need and prevent suffering. But, after all, there is no help that we can bring to our brother man like that help that we bring to him when we fellowship with him in his tears; when we put our own shoulder to the burden that he is carrying; when we lay our heart so closely along side of his heart that he hears and feels the throbbing of our heart as well as the throbbing of his own. The way to help men is to come into the lives of men, to get close to men.

And, now, if in connection with this principle of true helpfulness we should think of Almighty God's method of helping men, in the gospel of Jesus Christ we should find that God's method is builded upon this foundation principle: Almighty God helps men by coming close to men. The reason why the Christian revelation is the most practical system of helpfulness that the world has ever learned anything about is because it finds us where we live—coming down into the

deep recesses of our own inner life, enabling us to eschew the evil, and to cleave evermore to that which is good.

We think of God, then, as our helper who is near at hand. I have often wondered why it is that it seems so easy to picture God as in the far distance. Possibly it is because we always conceive of him as the Infinite One and so disassociate him from everything that is essentially human. I have thanked my heavenly Father, literally hundreds of times, that I cannot remember the time when I began to pray. Before the date that memory records I had learned to lisp my infant prayer at the knee of my Christian mother. But I remember very distinctly my conception of God's relation to the world and his relation to my own life during the early years of my Christian experience. I thought of him as away yonder in the infinite distance. That in the exercise of prayer I must breathe out my petition; that it traveled, to be sure, as if on the wings of the morning, until at last it found God's throne, and then the answer came back as if with the lightning's flash—that was my conception—God away yonder.

I hadn't gone very far in the experience of the Christian life until I began to find in the Bible the corrective of my wrong thinking concerning God's relation to my life. I was reading in the

old prophet, and I came upon this: "Behold, before they call I will answer, and while they are yet speaking, I will hear." In the Psalms I found: "Whither shall I go from thy Spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me. If I say, Surely the darkness shall cover me; even the night shall be light about me. Yea, the darkness hideth not from thee; but the night shineth as the day: the darkness and the light are both alike to thee."

I turned over to the pages of the New Testament. I heard the great Apostle on one occasion addressing a multitude of people, who never before had heard of the true God, I heard him say to them: "Though he be not far from each one of us: for in him we live, and move, and have our being." And I heard the Master himself declare: "The kingdom of God is within you."

And so I modified entirely my conception of God's relation to my own life, and now no longer in the exercise of prayer do I picture him at an infinite distance. I love rather to appeal to him under the figure of that beautiful couplet in one of Tennyson's sweet little poems:

Speak to him thou, for he hears, and Spirit with spirit can meet.

Closer is he than breathing, and nearer than hands and feet.

And this is the message of the Word of God regarding God's relation to the world and to our own lives, that God is nearer to us than the friend who sits by our side, closer to us than the companion of the joys and the sorrows of our lives; nearer to us than the very children who are bone of our bone, and flesh of our flesh.

Now, the infinite value, the infinite practical value of the relating of God to our lives in this fashion can hardly be conceived. And so God is a helper who is near at hand, and the most practical helper in all the universe.

I wish we might have the simple faith just to take him at his word. I am not at all afraid of atheism as a philosophy. That any man should be asked to believe that this world with all its marvelous mechanism and its fine adaptation of means to ends happen without intelligence or reason, is about as preposterous a proposition as a rational mind could be asked to entertain. But I am tremendously afraid of that practical sort of atheism which conceives of God remotely, which enables us to come into the house of the Lord one day in seven and recite glibly the words of the Creed, "I believe in God the Father Al-

mighty”—and all the rest, and then go out and live for six days in the week practically as though there were no God.

May I bring an illustration? One of our little girls was having a desperate time some years ago with the table of nines in the multiplication table. She had learned all the rest. I said to her one day when I happened to be at home: “Now, my dear, I want you just to go into the room and close the door and learn that table.” So she went in and in about three quarters of an hour she came out, her face all aglow. She said, “Father, I can say it now from beginning to end without hesitation and without mistake,” and so she did. I planted a kiss upon her cheek and told her how glad I was that she had mastered it. She loitered around a little, and I saw there was something in her mind, and in a moment, she stepped up and putting her arm about my neck, said, “Father, do you know how I did it?”

“Why, yes, my dear,” I said. “Of course I do. You just boned down to it in good, earnest, honest fashion, with the determination that you would make it your own.”

“Well,” she said, “I did, but before I did that, I got down on my knees and asked God to help me.”

That is a little child’s conception of God’s re-

lation to our life, which she had gathered from the instruction largely of her dear mother. But I submit to you that that is the true conception of God's relation to our lives.

There is no place where earth's sorrows are more felt than up in heaven.

There is no place where earth's failures have such kindly judgment given.

For the love of God is broader than the measure of man's mind,

And the heart of the Eternal is most wonderfully kind.

Philosophy is about done, thank heaven, with the conception of an absentee God. Let us have done with it in our own thinking, and in our own living, and picture God always as nearer to us than any human friend can possibly be.

Now, no man can read the Scriptures of either the Old or New Testament intelligently, without remembering very often that the writers of these precious Scriptures were a highly imaginative people. They delighted in figures of speech, and one which they use often is the flight of the imagination of the prophet and then the treatment of that as though it were actual history. I do not know a better illustration than this psalm affords.

"God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.

"Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea;

"Though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof.

"There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacles of the most High.

"God is in the midst of her; she shall not be moved: God shall help her, and that right early.

"The heathen raged, the kingdoms were moved; he uttered his voice, the earth melted."

You see the figure, the powers of nature let loose until devastation and ruin are everywhere rampant. What becomes of the child of God under those circumstances? "The Lord of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge. Come, behold the works of the Lord, what desolations he hath made in the earth. He maketh wars to cease unto the end of the earth; he breaketh the bow, and cutteth the spear in sunder; he burneth the chariot in the fire."

What becomes of the servants of God? "Be still, and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth.

"The Lord of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge."

O, my brethren, we are gathered here for great

and important business. But there is nothing that this General Conference could do which would send such a thrill throughout the great church as for the word to go forth that here we had come to a new and more vivid realization of the presence of the great God upon us. That would mean vastly more than the revision of Ritual or Discipline or anything else, that the whole church might feel the impulse Godward, and might know that we had dwelt here in the open vision of the face of the gracious and loving Father. And then all that shall be done shall accrue to the growth of the kingdom of our Lord and to the establishment of truth and righteousness, even unto the ends of the earth. Let us pray.

BISHOP J. L. NUELSEN

THE morning's devotional address was given by Bishop Nuelsen, who read the Scripture lesson from 1 Cor. 1. 18-25, and spoke as follows:

The thought underlying this passage is the contrast between human ideals and divine realities. But is there a contrast? Do not our human ideals stretch into the realm of the divine, and does not the divine come down and touch the human? Certainly. Ideals are good. They are necessary. A life without ideals is poor. Striving after ideals is ennobling and enriching. Yet our loftiest ideals have their limitations. We are apt to overestimate their power. They have done so much for us that we expect everything. But every now and then we reach in our own individual lives or in the life of the race a time when our ideals fail, when they break down, when the actual experiences run contrary to everything that we hoped for or were striving for; and then we are apt to be bewildered, perplexed, to become discouraged and faint-hearted. And in such a time we are living to-day.

What were our dominant ideals in the twentieth century thus far? The Greeks of old sought after wisdom, and we have worshiped knowledge. We have exalted scholarship; we look to the man

who knows as our saviour. "Knowledge is power." "Knowledge makes free." A most worthy ideal, and great were its results—not one syllable of disparagement.

Yet when it comes to the most important question—when we ask, "Has mere knowledge really made the world better, happier, nobler, more divine? Has mere knowledge saved us?" what is the answer? I have read the answer in those countries of Europe that have carried the torch of knowledge and have marched at the head of the procession, and that answer was written in rivers of blood and of tears.

The Jews of old asked for signs. They wanted to see things brought about. And we have worshiped success, power, efficiency, outward results. The man who can do things is the one whom we look upon as our saviour. Again I say—a fine ideal. And yet I cannot efface from my memory the sight of destroyed cities, of ruined homes, of wounded, maimed, dying men; of homeless, helpless women and children; of destruction and sorrow beyond description—brought about by whom? By the most efficient and most powerful nations in the world! Shattered ideals, shattered ideals everywhere! Beautiful they were and lofty like the spires of cathedrals; strong they appeared like fortresses; but now they are mere heaps of ruins.

But there is a divine reality that has not been touched by the furies of war—Christ and him crucified. “O,” do you say, “do you dare to put the cross of Christ on the battlefields of Europe?” If I could not put the cross of Christ into Europe, I would give up my hope. It is the only hope. And let me tell you, the cross of Christ has become more real and more dynamic; and the men and women of our day understand better and appreciate better the spiritual forces for which the cross of Christ is the symbol. What does the cross stand for? Among other things it stands for surrender, for sacrifice—for sacrifice not of things, but of self; for living, suffering, dying in behalf of others. The crucified Christ, the symbol and manifestation of divine reality, is becoming the great reality in many a life.

There is a significant revaluation of life's standards and aims and ideals going on. What was the attitude of many toward life? They came to life with claims and with demands: “Life, life,” they cried; “give me—give me my rights! I have claims to make. I have demands to make. I demand! I demand! Life, give me more, give me more and give me still more, and I will take, take, take. I am entitled to it. I have my rights upon life.”

And now the men and women are learning to say to life: “O Life, take, take, take.” They are

changing their language in the terrible fiery furnace. They say: "Life, thou hast claims upon me. Thou hast rights upon me. Thou art entitled to demand from me. Life, here, take, take, take me. Take my money, take my business, take my prospects."

How many men have I seen flinging away everything they had acquired just as a man would fling away the peelings of an orange! "Life, take my son," says the mother. "Take my second son; take my third son, take my last laddie." And I have seen mothers giving one son after the other and their last one, and I have seen in their eyes, though they were veiled in tears, a peculiar luster.

"Life, take my husband," says many a woman—"the father of my children." "Life, take everything I have; take my health, take my strength, take my very life—my all."

That is a changed attitude, a revaluation, and that has become a great reality, a living experience with thousands and with tens of thousands.

Now, I know that this is not a distinctively Christian experience, but I do say that this experience is opening the eyes of many to the significance and to the power of the cross of Christ, and what it stands for. It is not a very long way from that experience to the cross of Christ.

"Suffering together with Christ," "being crucified together with Christ"—those Pauline expressions were looked upon as somewhat mystical and strange in our everyday life, but they have become great realities. Unless the truth of this dying with Christ and surrendering with Christ, and abandoning everything for him, permeates our ideals and carries them to the very throne of God, all else we may do does not amount to very much. Sacrificial service, taking the burdens of others upon our own shoulders, carrying them to the cross of Christ, and lifting up others to him—lifting, giving, suffering, dying, if need be—this is the great divine reality that is taking hold of the minds and is gripping the hearts and lives of the men and women of to-day. The ideals of self-culture, of personal rights, of knowledge and power are small and shabby compared with the greatness and glory of this divine reality. Men and women of the General Conference, we are here to plan, we are here to make organizations, we are here to do all of these things. They are needed, and we need all the wisdom, we need all the power, we need all the efficiency, but above all—O that our church everywhere may be imbued with that spirit of self-sacrificing love in the power of Him who died for us, that we may live through him!

BISHOP WILLIAM A. QUAYLE

BISHOP QUAYLE spoke as follows:

Now, beloved, I do not know just how much the General Conference costs, but it is quite a sum I am told. Yet I think that all it cost is little to pay for this sweet fraternity that we have together. Every day, and every day, and every day, as I look at you and look around among the folks on the platform, my heart shouts "Hallelujah!" It is such a beautiful company, and we are all going to get ready by hard work to stay together forever in heaven. This morning for just a little while I want God to hear a planet's voice from this company. I want you to say if you love the Christ. We are going to have a love feast. Do not get up when you speak. That is too long a matter, for some of us are lengthy—in our physical make-up. Just be seated as you are, but lift your voice like a lark and say if you love the Christ.

[Many members of the Conference testified briefly to their love of Christ and the joy of many years in his service.]

"OUR CONVERSATION IS IN HEAVEN"

I wish you would read this with me. I did

not say it; I could not. I did not think it up; I could not; and if I had thought it up, I should not have dared to say it. I would have thought it was poetry and that it had better not be talked. Here it is: "Our conversation is in heaven." I would read on, but I cannot go further. I think we will stop there: "Our conversation is in heaven."

The American Revision says, "Our citizenship is in heaven." I love the American Revision as a subsidiary voice, but I love that great old music box of the old version, because when we read it out loud it is like hearing John Milton at an organ, playing on the organ and singing. "Our conversation is in heaven."

Now, some one is saying, "Let us be careful how he has his exegesis." Some people never can get farther than exegesis. Exegesis is a good place to start, but a poor place to conclude. Let us pay attention to the lift of the voice of God. It would appear that "in heaven" is the end of this strophe. And "in heaven" is where the stars are, and the mornings, and the suns that we cannot see but know they are there. It would seem as if, according to this poet, we were amongst the heavenly bodies, and it would seem as if we were a part of the celestial geography, and a part of the divine astronomy.

It is said that we talk about heaven too much.

My mind and observation are that we do not talk about it enough. The ground is good—O it is good ground! I am like John Burroughs in one matter—whenever I see newly plowed ground, I want to eat it, it smells so good, and I think it might taste better; but out of deference to the crops I forbear. It is a blessed ground! It bringeth forth violets and Sweet Williams by the flowing waters, and it bringeth forth daisies on the hill, and it bringeth forth sunflowers on the prairie. The ground is good; but there is not enough of it for the kingdom of God to house its folks in. This world is not big enough for God to hold a love feast in. He has got to have heaven so as to get the folks in. We have got to have a bigger country and we have got to have a longer life together. This country is going to quit after a while. I do not remember the date, and if I did, I would not mention it this morning; but it will not stay long enough.

Was not beloved Bishop Smith here four years ago? Yes. Where is he now? In heaven. Was not Bishop Walden here four years ago, with his stooped shoulders and his strange, keen eye? Yes. Where is he now? In heaven. Was not Bishop Warren here, with his stalwart figure that looked as if he could walk across the landscape of eternity and never get tired? Yes. Where is he? He is on the landscape of eternity, taking his

walk. Was not Robert McIntyre here four years ago, with his dreamy, far-away look? Yes. Where is he? He is where he looked. Was not Bishop Moore here, with the spirit of a soldier and the heart of an angel? Yes. Where is he? He is over where soldiership and angelhood are one. Was not Naphtali Luccock, that crystal soul and winsome personality, here? Where is he now? He is with the crystal Christ. Ah, that company of bishops, brethren! They were here but a few years ago, and they are not here now. But we have got to get acclimated to the country where we are going to be forever. "Our conversation is in heaven."

What is conversation? Well, I am sure it is all we are in the long run. If you listen to a man talk long enough, you will hear all he knows—plus. "Our conversation is in heaven." Ah, brothers, whether it be exegesis or no, let us know this, that whatever we say ends in heaven. Why? This end of the sentence is here, but the other end of the sentence is always in heaven. A woman, a preacher's wife—and her husband is here this morning—said to me with a strange quaver in her voice like music beginning, "You know, Brother Quayle, that our daughter, our only daughter, is in the glory land." Ah, me. She began talking of a daughter here, and she ended talking of a daughter there. The other end of

our conversation is always in heaven, thank God. We are all orators when we get religion, because the other end of our talk is heavenly eloquence.

Some one says, "This word means 'occupation.'" Yes, it does, thank God! It means "occupation"—our occupation is in heaven. You say "No. It is in Dover. It is in New York. It is in Kansas City." Where are Dover, New York, and Kansas City? They are down at the foot of the hill called Zion, right down at the foot of the hill; and if you look up, when the smoke shifts you will see the glittering of the holy towers, and hear the voice of God as he looks over and says, down to the world, "Good morning, Occupation. Good morning." Down at the foot of the hill the job goes on, but up at the top of the hill the job concludes.

Money—I heard that word once, although I am not strictly familiar with it. I have heard the word. What is money? Something to be earned on the ground and invested in eternity. That is money. And as we work at our work, what are we doing? Said a woman, "I am just an ordinary woman, and I am taking care of the baby." Thank God, God is mothering the baby too; and you and God together will rear that baby.

A woman who is rearing a baby, what is she doing? Rearing somebody for eternity. Our occupations are all not only under the eye of God,

but they are in the territory of eternity. Our occupation is in heaven, thank God! Man, you who sweep the street, sweep it well, and maybe God will give you a job sweeping the golden pavement after a while—if you do your work well here. He will need somebody to do that sort of work, when some of the saints come in and walk over the pavement; he will need someone to sweep the dust away. Man, you who are a statesman, get eager for God, and maybe he will call you into his Cabinet in heaven. Our occupation is in heaven, thank God.

But our friendship, where is it? It is in heaven, too. You know, I am one of the vagabonds of God, by the grace of my brethren. They said to me, "Brother Quayle, you go as an itinerant; and out in places where people are not careful what they hear, you speak." So there I am; and do you know, people sometimes say to me, "Why, Brother Quayle, do you not get tired of going around and seeing people?" No, praise God! Why? Because I am making friendships for eternity. I am just picking up some new friends, so that if I get to heaven, with God lifting a lot and myself lifting a little, when I come to the door of eternity maybe a great company will say, "Brother Quayle, welcome." Our friendships are in eternity. Here we are, all together, and the next time we meet we will be in

heaven. Thank God! We must not miss it. In heaven is our appropriate country. Robert Browning talks about our appropriate country. Our appropriate country is in heaven, and we are in it now, but in which end? The north end. O listen, brothers!

The north end of heaven is where the eternal cold stays, where the spring winds have no warmth, where the winters are all the year round wild and tumultuous. What is the south end? Where everlasting spring abides. In the south end of heaven we are going to be put. We are in the north end of heaven now, but flowers are blooming even here on the snowdrifts, thank God!

There was a man I knew who had a daughter, and that daughter had never been away from her home at all, to speak of. There came a time when she was going to be married. Her father's custom had always been to tuck that girl in bed at night. No matter how late he got in—and he was out late of nights on the Lord's errands—the door was left ajar and he was ordered by his child to come and tuck her in bed; and so always, whatever time of the night he came in, he would go in softly and tuck her in and kiss her; and sometimes she would partly awaken, and say, "Hello, daddy," and he would say, "Good night, sweetheart." And so it came to the last night

that she should be under his roof. He went in, and his heart was full of aching and full of tears, but he neither showed heartache nor tears. He smiled at her, and she said to him, "You are going to tuck me in"; and he said, "Yes, I will tuck you in." So he went in that last night that she was to be under his roof and under the shadow of his love, and he tucked her in and she put her arms around his neck and drew him close, and he put his arms around her and said, "O, my daughter"; and she just said, "Daddy"; and he tucked her in. I wonder if God, in the last night that we are to be in our home on the ground, will not come down and tuck us in. When our eyelids droop, and our voices falter, and we can hear no sound, some one will be there, and it will be God, and he will tuck us in; and he will say, "Sleep sweetly," and then he will stay right there and will not go away, and by and by he will awaken us with a kiss and say, "It is morning." Let us pray.

O, Christ, blessed be God that our conversation is in heaven. We do not want it to be anywhere else. We belong to thee, and thou belongest to us, and we belong to heaven. O give us a long, sweet springtime and summer in the land of eternal life. For Christ's sake. Amen.

BISHOP WILSON S. LEWIS

BISHOP LEWIS read a passage from the first chapter of Acts, beginning with verse 21, and spoke as follows:

The miracle of the ages is Jesus Christ, the Son of God manifest in the flesh. He himself is the miracle and the mystery. That which he did was but the overflow of the life that he was and the life that he is.

Jesus Christ, standing before the nations of the earth, manifest to us in this room this morning, this is the miracle of all the ages and the miracle of this age. He was concerned, when he was on the earth, and he gave evidence of it again and again, lest they who saw him should miss him by too much emphasis upon the signs and the symbols that were in their minds when they looked upon him. He would not have us miss him, nor miss the face of the Father, by looking upon the signs of his presence or the symbols of his power. He said to those who sought him, seeking a sign, "You seek a sign, but no sign shall be given but that of Jonah." Jonah, as good as dead for three days, but Jonah resur-

rected for service—this is all of the sign, the sign of a grave, the sign of the open tomb, the sign of the resurrection.

It was this one thought that filled the heart of the Master, that they should not miss him by the things that he did, even though he fed the thousands, even though he spake as no man spake, even though he did what no man could do, other than he. Yet he would not have us be lost in signs, be lost in a word. And for this very purpose he gave us this Holy Spirit, the Spirit of promise. And this was his word in the last hour that he was with his disciples—"Ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost has come upon you, and ye shall be witnesses unto me." It is this power to witness unto Christ that concerns us this morning, in order that we may see clearly through all signs, all symbols, all the problems, and set Jesus Christ, the Son of God, as the answer and the final light that should be revealed in all these problems that confront us to-day.

There was one characteristic that was always dominant when Jesus Christ appeared—when Jesus Christ does appear—and that was that the multitudes who saw him were stirred to new life—always. At the wedding, in Jerusalem, always, everywhere, in the hungry multitudes that fed upon his bounty, wherever he was, wherever he spoke, a new life stirred the multitudes that saw

him and heard him. Their hearts were filled with great questions, their souls were weighed with great problems, they saw things in new relations, they understood things as they never had understood them before.

A new life dominated all the people who saw him, who heard him. That was the sign, that is the sign, of his presence—a new awakening, a new interpretation, a new power, a new ability to do, a new courage to dare, a new thought interpreted,—always, when Jesus is present. He gives us by his Spirit, as we see him through the Spirit, he gives us to see, to differentiate between that which is essential, absolutely essential, and that which is only relative, which is an incident. He would have us understand that there are differences of place, differences in problems. There are mountain heights from which we, by his grace, are able to interpret him to the greatest possible advantage.

He would have us to understand that the problems that are essential, that first things, shall be put first; that there are matters needing interpretation that only the Son of God enlightening by his Holy Spirit within us will be able to make us understand. He would have us, for instance, to see clearly, this morning, Jesus Christ, resplendent in all the books, in all the chapters, in all the verses of this wonderful Book of books.

He is the interpretation of the Book; but he is the interpretation of the Book because he is the interpreter of life, and of life as it is practically lived out from day to day in the practical problems that confront us.

Now, what I wish to emphasize this morning is, as we confront the problems that are before us to-day, these difficulties that no man can solve; these questions, delicate, exceedingly delicate; these great, far-reaching truths that will go beyond us, that will touch the Himalayas, that will touch the Matterhorn, that will touch beyond the seas—these great problems that we confront, He is here to-day, standing in our midst, close by our side, to give us the interpretation of the problems as they are related to his own life.

If only we will but reach out our hands, if only we will but glance up into his face, if only we will lay hold upon him as the interpreter of our life and of the life of those to whom we are related, we shall not go astray. Standing on these mountain heights, confronting these tremendous problems that affect the destiny of millions upon millions of men, we cry out, "Who is sufficient for these things?" Jesus Christ has appointed those of us who are here to receive power to witness—power to witness, in the things that we see, in the things that we think, in the things that we do—power to witness to him as the solution

of all of the difficult problems that confront us. So we shall not take the symbol, or the sign, but we shall use the sign, though it be the glory of the morning, to be brought face to face with him this day, and know him, and understand his relation to us.

Sir Oliver Lodge said in a recent book, "What Britain and the world need is prophets and saints." I marvel at the insight of the great scientist—"prophets and saints." Not discoverers, not historians, and not scientists, but, says the great scientist, "What Britain and the world need is prophets and saints." I do not think that he used the word "prophet" in the Hebrew or in the Christian sense. But he certainly got the great need of the world. He may have approached this great problem from a new angle of vision. It is possible for a man to see the sun from a thousand angles; and this great man saw the great need of the world at the present moment—prophets who can hear and declare, saints who can live and interpret—prophet and saint in one, that shall know the mind of God and do it by the power of his Holy Spirit. So we cry this morning for illumination, illumination from the inner sanctuary of the Holy One, illumination to know and power to do. And this is the one cry of our hearts as we meet the problems of the days.

O Christ Jesus, thou Son of the living God, show thy face this day and help us to behold the beauty of the Father in the radiance of thine own countenance. Glorify thine own self, we beseech thee, through us, as we stand before thee this day, confronting the responsibility, bearing the weight which thou hast controlled. Hide not thy face, O thou Holy One, behind all the problems of the day, but make the problems reveal thee as the sun reveals the beauty of the earth this morning. Pour upon us thy Holy Spirit, that we may witness, each in his place, and may know the power of God to lead a human soul out into companionship with thyself. Amen.

BISHOP EDWIN H. HUGHES

BISHOP HUGHES spoke as follows:

We shall think for a while of these words from the Epistle of James, the third chapter, the seventeenth verse, "The wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable." It is rather strange that the words have not had a larger place in the peace discussion which the great war in Europe has evoked. They appear to indicate what must come before any peace that represents the mind of God and so the powers "above." They declare that the heavenly wisdom is first pure, then peaceable. They establish an order that is necessary because it has the sanction of heaven. Evidently, then, in this view peace is not primary; it is secondary. It is not the main product; in a sense it is a by-product.

Nor is this the only place in the Holy Book where the same principle is stated. The evangelical prophet, Isaiah, says, "Open ye the gates that the righteous nation . . . may enter in. Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee." Here peace is the outcome of righteousness and

trust. The mind, stayed and rested on the infinitely pure God, and so coming to purity itself, knows peace. The song of the angels of the nativity gives the same heavenly order, "Peace on earth among men of good will." The good will is primary here. Peace comes to men who have a certain prior inner disposition.

What is now said, or to be said, is not to be taken as any reflection upon the pacifist movement of our time. The most ardent peace advocate must recognize that his effort is simply to transfer the battle from one realm to another. His aim is to substitute for the brutality of carnal battle the more refined and reasonable battle of an international court. But the ideal of God looks farther than that—even to the establishment of full peace as the issue of full purity. In the final day, here or over yonder, we shall not need even arbitration. The sword shall be destroyed, and so shall the gavel! The reign of utter purity shall be followed by the reign of utter peace.

In certain fairly completed earthly movements God gives us a chance to see the working out of this order of his truth. Long before the Civil War there was slight peace in our own nation. The war merely transferred the contest from the forum to the field. We need not now discuss the special merits of the method by which slavery

was finally abolished. About that there would doubtless be disagreement. But we all now see that no compromise could possibly bring peace. We had the Missouri Compromise, the Omnibus Bill, the Kansas-Nebraska Bill. After each of these we said, "We shall have peace now." Yet there was no peace with reference to slavery until there was purity with reference to slavery. In this matter God has given us a half century of commentary on the words, "The wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable."

The truth could find contemporaneous illustration. Wherever else the parallel between the anti-slavery and the anti-saloon reform breaks down, it surely holds good at this one point: The only peace in either case is the peace of purity. High license, mullet laws, restricted hours, screen doors and windows do not bring peace, simply because they do not bring purity. The divine method cannot be abandoned here. God will be grandly insistent again; and when the heavenly wisdom gets its way, there will be purity first, and after that peace.

Most important of all for this special hour is the personal application. The law of God is like the garment taken from the Crucified Lord—it is of one piece, woven throughout without seam. So the only way to personal peace is through personal purity. We do not now label the types

and forms of purity; and we will not quarrel over theological names. Yet we must hold to the main fact: Peace is not a direct gift, dropped like a fragment from heaven into the open soul. It is one of the "fruits" of the Holy Spirit within man, making man himself a minor holy spirit; a "fruit," mark you, grown from within and not fastened on from without. The most peaceful days that we know are the purest days that we know. It is the divided and compromising heart that knows not rest. It is the unified and purified heart that experiences peace. If you can come to the end of this day, certain that in all its hours you have been simply pure in deed and word and thought, you are predestined to an evening time of peace.

It is interesting to observe how in one of our best known hymns on peace this idea or its equivalent occurs and recurs. Peace comes to the surrendered will from oneness with the pure God, as the verses state:

Prince of Peace, control my will,
Bid this struggling heart be still;
Bid my fears and doubtings cease,
Hush my spirit into peace.

Thou hast bought me with thy blood,
Opened wide the gate to God:
Peace I ask, but peace must be,
Lord, in being one with thee.

May thy will, not mine, be done;
May thy will and mine be one;
Chase these doubtings from my heart,
Now thy perfect peace impart.

The peace of God which passeth all understanding is the peace of unspeakable purity, the poise of the divine life set in its own infinite balance. And the peace of the Christian man is the same, brought within the limits of our human life. When we truly receive the Risen Christ into all the rooms of our being, we receive also the gift that comes with him. His benediction is evermore, "Peace be unto you." Let us pray.

Our Heavenly Father, bless, we beseech thee, to our good this very simple message. How revealing is thy great word, and how in the midst of our folly it is wisdom, and how in the midst of all our weak and puny ways of seeking large things it comes every once in a while with its simple, wonderful message. We have been thinking about that peace that is promised in thy Holy Book to them that yield to thee, that come to thee for purity of heart, that labor that they may have peace in the heart. We ask thee that thou dost save us from the delusions of any short-cut in this big matter; that thou may help us to understand that thou hast established the divine order, and that we shall follow it even to the very end.

It is an amazing prayer that we offer now, and we offer it only in the name of Jesus Christ: O God, our Father, give us thy peace this day, and give us that peace, that coming into oneness with thee, surrendering our wills to God, making our wills even one with the will of him whom we love to call our Lord, we may come by thy commandment and established order to that peace of soul for which we long.

Finally, give us some humble spot among thy many mansions, some sheltering shade where sin and strife shall cease, and flows forth through heaven the great expanse of the river of thy peace. Through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

BISHOP FRANK M. BRISTOL

BISHOP BRISTOL spoke as follows:

Our Lord Jesus gave us a new idea of greatness and a new vision of life when he laid his strongest ethical emphasis upon service. Heretofore they were great who had the greatest number to serve them. Henceforth they should be great who served the greatest number. Greatness is service; service is greatness. As we study the majestic universe, we find this law of beneficent activity everywhere—stars lending glory to stars, suns kindling suns to splendor, and all the heavenly bodies bending their benign influences upon the earth, to make the desert rejoice and the earth bring forth fruit; and as we rise to the higher worlds, the very angels are only messengers waiting to fulfill the commands of God in angelic service.

And the infinite God is the eternal, omniscient and omnipotent servant of the universe, the greatest servant, because he serves the greatest number. From the bud that bursts forth into blossoms, to the bird that breaks into song; from the tiniest insect that drones its life away in a summer hour, to the tall angel that John saw

standing in the sun; the great God is a servant, consecrating himself to ministering to all his creatures; and man becomes likest God when, like God, he becomes a servant—the servant of all. “Whosoever will be great among you,” said Jesus, “shall be your minister, and whosoever of you will be the chiefest shall be servant of all.”

When we study the life of the Lord Jesus we see dominant in that life this idea of Jesus. It is the ideal life. Jesus Christ as a boy stands in the temple, confounding the doctors with the wisdom of his questions and answers; and when his alarmed and solicitous mother seeks him in the temple, and finds him, he turns to her and says, “Wist ye not that I must be about my Father’s business?”

As a boy he caught and taught this idea of service; and as he went on into his ministry he said, “I came down from heaven not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me”; and again, “The Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister”; and at the close of his life of service he prayed to the Father, “I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do.” From boyhood to death he carried out in his own life the sublime and divine idea of service; and we become likest the Lord Jesus Christ when we surrender ourselves to the service of God and humanity as did the Lord Jesus Christ.

The cost of greatness, according to the teachings of the Lord, is service; and according to the life of the Lord, the cost of service is self-sacrifice. Of our Lord it was said, "He laid aside the glory which he had with the Father before the world was, that he might come to serve humanity. He made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and became obedient unto death; wherefore God hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name." Greatness is service, and service is greatness. This Man of supreme greatness was "a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief"; and he paid the price of his own precious blood for the greatness of being the Saviour of the world. And when he was on the cross, even his enemies said what was sublimely true, "He saved others; himself he cannot save." And because he did not and would not save himself, he saved others; and because he had the power to save others, he would not save himself. If we would be servants, truly great servants, we must pay the price of being exalted to the station of the Lord Jesus Christ, and, saving others, we must realize that we cannot save ourselves.

You remember the story of William Rugh, the newsboy of Gary, Indiana. I may not be fully familiar with all the details of the story, but there was a motorcycle accident in which a girl

was very seriously injured. She was taken to the hospital, and the surgeon said that she could not live, her burns were so serious, unless they could get new skin enough to graft upon her poor burned body. William Rugh, that humble newsboy, read what had happened in the papers that he was crying on the street. He did not know the girl; he never had seen her nor heard of her; but when he read that if they could get enough skin to graft on her body, they could save her life, he said, "I will offer my 'game' leg." He went to the hospital and they took him at his word. They amputated what he called his "game" leg, and grafted that skin onto the body of that little girl. She lived, and is living to-day; but William Rugh died. When he was dying of the attack of pneumonia which set in after the operation, the little girl sent him a bouquet of flowers; and as they laid them on his bed, he looked at them, and with a wan smile said, "Just tell her I am glad." He knew he had to die, but he was not sorry. And when his mother was crying by his bedside as if her heart would break, he weakly put his hand on hers and said: "Don't cry, mother. I never amounted to anything before, but now I have done something for somebody." And his spirit went home to Him who did something for everybody, thank God, but he did it by giving his life for everybody.

O let us do something for somebody, do something for everybody, and be willing to pay the price, if need be, of our fortune, our reputation, our very life; but let us do something for somebody, as the servants of God and as the servants of humanity. Greatness is service; service is greatness. And this is the way of happiness; he that seeks happiness shall never find it. The way of happiness is the way of service, the way of duty, the way of beneficence. We used to ask the question—and I am afraid we do not ask it often enough now—"Do you enjoy your religion?" Now the question is, do you enable the rest of the folks to enjoy your religion? Does your wife enjoy your religion? Do your children enjoy your religion? Do your neighbors enjoy your religion? Does India enjoy your religion? Does China enjoy your religion? Does this poor, sinful, dying world enjoy your religion? Religion has ceased to be a mere matter of personal, selfish enjoyment, and has come to be a matter of consecrated service.

I should be sorry to think that Methodism was losing its emotion, or its emotionalism. I do not believe that it is; but religious emotion is simply expressing itself in a different way from what it used to. It used to express itself in vocabulary, it used to express itself vocally; and yet we came to feel that even that expression of emotion had

become a habit. It became worse than that. It became a gift; and when it became a habit, and then became a gift, it began to lose its real efficiency as a spiritual power in the Christian life and in the Christian Church; and we got to feeling that the cheaper the watch, the louder the tick.

To-day the deep religious emotion of the church—and it was never deeper, never more genuine than it is to-day—is expressing itself in consecrated service to God and humanity; and that emotionalism goes out to our neighbor and our fellow man in saving and helping the Lord Jesus Christ to save a world. “He who seeks happiness shall not find it.” “Blessed are the pure in heart.” Seek purity of heart, and you have got blessedness. “Blessed are the peacemakers.” Become a peacemaker and you have got the blessedness. If you have the flower, you have its fragrance. If you have the bird, you have its song. If you get out of the narrow, gloomy cell of selfishness and individualism into the great wide world of beneficent activity, all the suns and stars will laugh their glory on your path. Do your duty, serve God, and the happiness and joy will take care of themselves, just as the fragrance takes care of itself if you have the flower, and the song takes care of itself if you have the bird.

Seek for the higher things of God, and the

spirit of the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will have what the Lord Jesus had—the joy unspeakable. For we are told that he, “for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame.” What was the joy set before him? The joy of service, the joy of saving a world; and for the joy of service and the joy of saving a world he endured the cross, despising the shame; and he paid the cost, not only of service, but the cost of the greatness that exalted his name above every name, so that “every knee should bow, . . . and that every tongue should confess, that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.” Greatness is service; service is greatness.

Lord, pour upon us thy spirit of self-sacrifice, thy spirit of world-wide service. Give us to know that we are created for service, saved for service, and educated for service. Life is for service, intellect is for service, genius is for service, money is for service, power and influence are for service, and religion is for service. To-day, as servants of the Lord Jesus Christ, as servants of the great good God, as servants of the church, as servants of humanity, may the words of our mouths and the meditations of our hearts be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, our strength, and our redeemer. Amen.

BISHOP HOMER C. STUNTZ

BISHOP STUNTZ spoke as follows:

I ask you to think with me this morning upon the prayer of Saint Paul as recorded in the first chapter of his letter to the Philippians, a part of which I will read.

[Bishop Stuntz read the Scripture lesson from Philippians, 1. 3-11.]

There is no more rich and fruitful study for building up the souls of believers than the prayers of the apostle Paul. There may exist somewhere a volume of exposition of these prayers. I have never yet laid hold of one. Some man with the expository gift and with great spiritual insight will some time write and publish a volume, that will be prized by every lover of the Word, on the prayers of the apostle Paul. I would like to recommend to every layman to make a study of them, and to every preacher a series of sermons upon them.

Take this one. Think of the people for whom he was offering that prayer. Lydia, the seller of purple. The little group of disciples there at Philippi, where he had been scourged and imprisoned, and where they sang praises at mid-

night with their feet in the stocks, and God heard them and sent an earthquake to shake them loose and give them liberty. He could not forget that night when God sent an earthquake to release him. And the little band of disciples who were gathered with him that night were very precious. He said, "I thank my God upon every remembrance of you."

Paul was a great lover. Every man who helps his fellow men is a lover. And the measure of his power is the measure of his love. You feel the great, loving heart of Paul beating in these prayers. Notice that first petition: "And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more." And the first thing that impresses you in reading the prayer, if you have first by the use of your imagination called up the scenes in the midst of which they were living,—and if you haven't any imagination pray for that—is the situation of that small group of persecuted converts. If you have not understood the setting of this prayer, you will get little good out of it. Think of those few converts, storms of persecution breaking over them! They had no church buildings, they had no trained ministry, they had no endowed Christian college—they hadn't even a Northwestern or a New York Advocate. They hadn't anything to build up their souls with, as we would say. You can well imagine that a

statesman of the kingdom of God out there might have prayed: "This I pray, that some of your people may give your money to build a church. This I pray, that some of your people may have grace to rise up and begin to train a ministry." Now, he did not even say that.

The fundamental needs of those converts, as Paul saw their need, poor as they were, without any equipment for Christian work as they were, was love. "This I pray, that your love may run over the brim." That is the meaning of the words "Abound more and more." "This I pray, that you believers, despised and in a hopeless minority even though you are, not that you may have a great fine cathedral-like church to invite people into, but that you may have such a love as will bear all opposition down." The greatest gift in the world is love. The greatest power you will ever have or I will ever have will be because God has filled and crowned our lives with the love of Christ.

When Paul came to give the uttermost secret of his fruitful and constructive service for Christ, he gave it in these words. People said he was insane. He said, "No; whether we be beside ourselves, it is to God; whether we be sober, it is for your cause." But here is the reason: The love of Christ shuts us up to this course, the love of Christ constrains us to the lives we are living.

If there is any one thing we ought to pray for our beloved church this day, it is the mighty flooding of the love of Christ in our hearts. If we could have that, we could do away with one half of our straining at the pumps to get money. What is the reason we do not have more money given freely? Because there is not more love in our hearts. God help us to see it this morning. "This I pray, that your love may run over the brim," that you may have enough for yourselves and something to spill over on the thirsty lives beyond, "that your love may abound."

That was not the end of it. Look at the next clause. He had in his time, as we do, more or less wildfire and fanaticism. One time, I distinctly remember, a representative of one of those fanatic sects came into my prayer meeting in India. I think he came from Shenandoah, Iowa, and was a member of the "Root and Branchers," as they called them, who believed that the roots and branches of sin were all taken out of them. He came into my prayer meeting, took hold of his boot straps, and began to jump and shout until women were frightened and fainted away. He was a dear boy and full of love. But Paul said, "And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and all discernment." Power is a great thing, but undisciplined and ungoverned power is dangerous—nothing

more dangerous in the world. God grant us power, but also knowledge and all discernment, that we may turn the power into a steam box that will drive a piston and turn regular wheels and bring out valuable results for the Kingdom. "Knowledge and all discernment."

The word that Paul used is a word almost the exact equivalent of our expression, "hard common sense." What he prayed was that they should love mightily, the love running over the edges, and yet should be under the control of knowledge—knowledge of history, knowledge of religious emotion, knowledge of church history, knowledge of doctrine, knowledge of God's work, knowledge of God's world, knowledge and all common sense in harnessing that knowledge to this power.

Now, go on. That is all instrumental, so "that we may approve the things that are excellent." I might say, three fourths of all the trouble in that day was to approve things that were excellent and disapprove the things that were not excellent. Again, see where they were braided into a social and domestic and religious and political order which was all shot through with evil and darkness—food offered to idols before it was bought and taken home, evil and tyrannous customs in home and family as to treatment of wife and children. He said: "Now, in this environ-

ment of heathenism, the thing that will qualify you to cut your way out of the jungle, and will be an infallible guide through the maze, the gift that will more completely equip you to approve the things that are excellent in God's sight, is love." You might suppose that it would be knowledge; that what would enable you to "approve things that are excellent" would be knowledge. It is not so; nor is it so to-day. When you come down to the question of choosing what amusements are permissible for a Christian it is not knowledge that settles it, in the last analysis, it is love. That is a better guide for this purpose than all the knowledge you can get into your mind. We never have any trouble in the church in reference to choosing as to those matters when we are so full of the love of Jesus Christ that we are sensitive to the slightest whispers of his will, when we are so eager to do his will and so eager for his fellowship that anything that would grieve him even by a letter is hateful in our eyes. Love will do that. O that we may be filled with love, that we might "approve things that are excellent."

Now, he goes on, "that ye may be sincere." You know the derivation of that word—"sine cera," without wax. It comes from the furniture trade. In those days they made furniture of two kinds. One kind was glued together and would fall apart

on a hot day, if it were damp; the other kind was doweled together. Paul used a different word, made of two words—"I pray that you may be 'judged by the sun.' " "I want you to be filled with love, to approve things that are excellent, in order that you may be judged by the sun"—*heliokrinoi*, from *helios*, "the sun," and *krinein*, "to judge." He borrowed that word from the cloth merchants. Why? He was a man of swift and instinctive sympathy with his converts, and he lived on a level with them, like some of our preachers need to learn to do.

He lived where they lived. I heard a preacher say to another, "I can beat you out of sight in saying nice things before an audience; but I would give my right arm if I could get the audiences like you do." He got them because he lived where they lived. He was in swift and instinctive sympathy with their daily problems. Who were his first converts? A little group of cloth merchants. What was the meaning of this term, "judged by the sun"? When a buyer in the East expresses doubt as to the warp and woof of a bolt of cloth he is buying, the merchant holds the cloth between him and the sun, and looks through the weave at the light of the sun; and the would-be buyer buys or rejects it. Paul prayed that we might be so filled with love that, discerning between things good and things evil, we might

live a sun-judged life; that unrolling the warp and woof of our daily life, of our words, of our thoughts, of our deeds, with the Sun of Righteousness shining through for all men to see, it might be "without spot or blemish or any such thing" in the eyes of God and men.

Brothers, what is the greatest hindrance to our success? Not infidelity, not higher criticism. Don't anybody get scared about that. What hurts us is nothing from the outside. Finally and ultimately the thing that hurts us is un-Christian tempers and behavior on the part of us who bear His name. That is why I bring to you this morning this great prayer of Paul, and ask that it may be fulfilled for me and for you and for this whole Conference and for this great church that we represent, and for the world, that we may be filled with love overflowing, and by that great and blessed gift pick our way through life, choosing the things that are worth choosing, and rejecting the things that are unworthy, so that we may live a life that is judged by the very Sun of Righteousness before our own generation. Let us pray.

O Christ, fill us with thy love this morning, that the words of our mouths and the motives that move us may be acceptable in thy sight. For Christ's sake, Amen.

BISHOP THEODORE S. HENDERSON

BISHOP HENDERSON read the Scripture lesson from Rom. 1. 8-17, and spoke as follows:

Let us stop and consider just one single phrase which occurs in this Scripture lesson, for two or three brief observations: "I am under obligation." In a student Conference in a Western State, where there were not less than eight hundred odd student leaders of the universities, colleges, and secondary schools of the Middle West, with instructors on the summer Conference faculty, it was my privilege and joy to have a section of that Conference on how to introduce to Christ.

Before we had finished our work in the ten days of the Conference we had settled upon these three fundamental conditions that the Christian must have in order to do his work as a disciple. First, every man everywhere needs Jesus Christ. Secondly, Jesus Christ is able to meet every need of every man everywhere. Third, I owe to every man everywhere everything Jesus Christ is to me.

Jesus Christ, in the first proposition, is a necessity rather than a convenience. Jesus Christ is

not an amiability, but a spiritual necessity to every man everywhere. He is not an elective study; he is in the required curriculum of the kingdom of God. You can make no abridged edition of his life for any man anywhere.

Secondly, Jesus Christ is big enough, brave enough, beautiful enough, to take in the needs of every man everywhere. There are no incurables for the Great Physician. The people who test remedies test them at the place of the hardest patient. When antitoxin is tested it is tested not on tonsilitis but on the worst case of diphtheria. Jesus Christ must be tested not where it is easiest but where it is hardest. The people who work for Christ in the hardest places never have any intellectual difficulty about his deity. The people in India who face the necessities of India, as Christian workers, do not have any trouble as to whether his divinity is quantitative or qualitative—they know. No rescue mission worker ever has any trouble on the ability of Jesus. They hear from him every day.

Thirdly, I owe everything to every man that Jesus Christ is to me. The man who discovers the powers of radium, who would keep his discovery to himself, would not be admitted in good standing to the medical profession. You ask the doctors over in the Casino. The man who locks up in his life anything that he knows about Christ

fails being a Christian to that extent. If I know anything of the power, if I know anything of the peace, if I know anything of the purity of Christ in my life, I am under obligation to tell it to every man everywhere—to tell it in the office, tell it in the home, tell it in the school, tell it in the church, tell it abroad.

A friend of mine who perhaps has addressed as many men throughout the world in the last five years as any living man, said that he went to his pastor one day (he was a member of a little church in a certain section of this State), and said, "Pastor, I think we ought to do something about getting the men of this community to Christ."

The pastor asked, "What do you want to do?"

"I am a plain business man," was the reply. "Let us sit down and do it in business fashion, and block out the men who ought to know Christ and apparently do not care about him, and take our responsibility, for we owe it to men to tell them about Christ. Now, pastor, what do you want to do?"

"I want to do a pastor's work. What do you want to do? Do you want to drive the laymen out of the church? If I should ask Mr. R., who is vice-president of the Diamond Trust, to go around and invite men to Christ he would leave the church."

The layman replied, "I do not believe a word of it."

By way of parenthesis, I will say for myself, if any man would leave the Methodist Church for that cause, the sooner he would go out of it the better. But I do not believe a word of it; that is the thing to hold the men in the church. So my friend and this pastor met one morning after an announcement by the pastor that any who were interested in this matter might meet the pastor the next Sunday morning in his study.

When my friend went down expecting to meet perhaps half a dozen men out of that little suburban church of only one hundred and fifty members, a goodly number were present, and the first man he met was the vice-president of the Diamond Trust.

"What are you doing here?" he said.

"Why, what do you think I am in the church for, only to get some one to Christ?"

So they agreed to block it out.

My friend told me: "There was one man in the town to whom I thought I ought to speak about Christ. He was an osteopathic physician. He was the lawn tennis champion, one of those smooth, oily, agreeable brethren, who can drop the ball over the net." He continued: "I felt I would not like to go to see him. I hoped they would give him to somebody else."

But when he received his list the first name on it was the osteopath, so he said he thought he would get to it right away. On Monday night he went and rang the osteopath's bell and the osteopath came to the door.

Some men would have half wished that the osteopath would not be at home, and then have blamed the providence of God for having him absent. But he went down and the osteopath came to the door, and said, "Come in. I am glad to see you."

"No, you are not," he said.

"Yes, I am; come in."

"You don't know what I have come down here for?"

"Well, I can guess it."

"O, you can't guess it in a hundred guesses."

"I could guess it the first time."

"What do you think I am down here for?"

"Why, a company of you men got together in the church a couple of weeks ago, and blocked out a lot of us men who are not Christians, and thought it was high time for us to give our hearts to God. And you have come down to talk to me about it—and I think it is the finest thing I ever heard, and I am ready now."

Said Fred B. Smith, "When that Easter Sunday came in that little church, fifty-seven people stood around the altar of that Congregational

church, to be received into the church; and the proudest man in the company was the vice-president of the Diamond Trust, for he pointed to one man and said, 'I brought him,' and to another and said 'I got him,' and so on." There is nothing like it. They say that there is joy in the presence of the angels of God. Who is in the presence of the angels? Christ. And he said "These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you." Joy in the heart of the Redeemer before the presence of the angels of God is the joy that he will give you. God help us for the Redeemer's sake. Amen.

BISHOP WILLIAM O. SHEPARD

BISHOP SHEPARD spoke as follows:

I will read some words from the Gospel of John, chapter twenty-one—familiar words, but dear to every Christian heart.

“So when they had dined, Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my lambs. He saith to him again the second time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my sheep. He saith unto him the third time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third time, Lovest thou me? And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee. Jesus saith unto him, Feed my sheep.”

We had a great true word the other morning from Bishop Anderson, that the Lord is our helper. And the truth of that every one of us in his weakness has understood. Without Him we can do nothing. We have no might in ourselves.

We cannot fight the battle against sin. We have no weapon with which to fight it. The only use of the will is to keep us forever clinging to him. Jesus said that men ought always to pray and not to faint; and that by clinging to him, only, we get our strength. The battle is the Lord's. People of a long time ago understood it perfectly. The psalmist cried out, "The Lord is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid? . . . Even mine enemies . . . came upon me to eat up my flesh." And now, after that experience, he cries, "Though an host should encamp against me, my heart shall not fear: though war should rise against me, in this will I be confident. One thing have I desired of the Lord, that I will seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life." Jesus said once (and that truth comes down to us) that his disciples were the branches. He said to them: "Ye are the branches. As the branches cannot bear fruit of themselves, so neither can ye, except ye abide in me."

It is well for us that we shall learn that we can do nothing without him, so that we shall constantly turn over our temptations to him. I believe it is the Christian's privilege, when a temptation comes, or a trial is upon him, to say to his Lord, "Lord, take care of this; I am busy somewhere else," if so be he is busy somewhere else;

and that the Lord will take care of his temptations and will take care of his tasks and give him sufficient strength.

But what I want to present this morning is just the other side of that blessed truth, that the Lord is our helper. There is something better than that for every Christian heart—we may be helpers of the Lord; and our joy is not in the fact that the Lord helps; and our joy is not in the fact that by-and-by if we are faithful we are going to get through the gates into the city: but, after all, the very crown of our joy is that he calls us friends, and permits us to help him in the great world-task. The greatest joy a Christian can know is in being a worker with God. The branches cannot bear fruit without the vine. But, O mystery and wonder!—the vine cannot bear fruit without the branches; and Jesus Christ in some great sense is dependent upon you and me. He cannot do the work he wishes to do in this world without these men and women who are before me—without his church. I have had a good many answers to the inquiry which I have been reading for a good many years in the books, “Why did Jesus come into the world?” I have been told that Jesus came into the world to teach the Fatherhood of God; and I think he did. And I have been told that Jesus came into the world to work some strange change in the mind of God;

and I cannot understand it. And not having had a sufficient answer to that inquiry, I think I have a right to make an answer for myself; and my answer to that question, "Why did Jesus come into the world?" is this: He came to get some hands and feet.

He came to get some hands that he might minister to the wants of mankind, that he might lay them upon blind eyes, and behold, they should see! And put his fingers into deaf ears, and behold, they should be unstopped! And lay his cooling hand upon the fevered brow, and behold, the fever should cease!

He came to get some hands, and he came to get some feet that he might go about doing good. He came to get some lips that they might speak messages of love, his matchless parables, his words to the sorrowing and to the sinners. And he is the same yesterday, to-day, and forever in his great yearning, my brethren; and his yearning to-day is that he may be incarnated, that he may get some more hands to lay upon blind eyes, that he may get some more feet carrying him about doing good, to get lips to preach his gospel in all the lands. And our joy is that we may be so identified in spirit and in task with Jesus Christ that we can say with the great apostle, understanding at least something of that mystic glory, "I live, and yet not I, but Christ liveth in

me, and the life I now live in the flesh I live by the faith and impulse of Jesus who loved me, and gave himself for me”—blessed exchange—“gave his glorious self for my selfish self. And now the life I live I live for him and with him.”

And brothers, I want to come back to that great truth, that we may be of help to the Lord. And O what helpers we may be! Someone said —was it Moody?—that the world had never seen what God could do with one consecrated man. I change that a little this morning as I stand in the presence of the representatives of my great church, and say that the world has never seen what God can do with one fully consecrated church. O that we may see it! O that we may be the body of Christ in very deed, individually and collectively!

And in these days in which we are talking about union, I think I may change it a little more and say that the world has never seen what God can do with united Christendom. God grant that he may send it to us.

Reading my Scriptures one day I ran across this expression—I had seen it many times, but it came to me, with new force: “workers together with God.” And then I thought about it, thought about the possibility of all my church working hand in hand, eye to eye, no divisions, no selfishness any place. And then I thought of the sister

church that we are coming to love so much, and with whom, God grant, we may soon be united, and I said to myself, "What could we do if we were all working together, together, together—all the people working together?" These two great branches of Methodism, yea, all these branches of Methodism working together with God for the salvation of the world! And then I went out in my thought to the Baptists and the Presbyterians, Disciples, the Congregationalists, and all those that love the Lord Jesus Christ, and prayed in the words of Christ's great prayer, that we might be one, that the world might know that Jesus Christ's mission was not in vain; that we might carry the gospel everywhere.

Brothers, what is our motive? We must be workers. We heard about it yesterday. What shall be our great motives? Sometimes in a pastorate, when I had some difficult task, perhaps had to make some call that seemed to me difficult, I would, before going out, sit down to the piano and run over some of those martial hymns: "Work, for the night is coming"; "Onward, Christian soldiers," and try to inspire myself to my duty by singing some of those hymns. And sometimes it would not work, sometimes it would not inspire me. And I said: "I worked yesterday and I shall work to-morrow. Why should I work to-day? To-day is vacation time." And

then I would turn over to some of those tender hymns:

Do you know the world is dying for a little bit of love?
Everywhere we hear their sighing, for a little bit of love.

And sometimes I was inspired by the thought of the need of my people, and would go out and do my duty, and pick out some difficult task. But at other times I said: "What of it? I too am sighing for a little bit of love, a little bit of comfort, for some one to say a kind word. It is a difficult thing to live in the public eye and have no one that understands. I guess I will rest to-day." I was not inspired.

But I will say to you this morning, if my task was difficult, and I turned to some of those hymns and understood the truth of some of those hymns like,

Saviour, thy dying love thou gavest me,
Nor should I aught withhold, dear Lord, from thee,

I never failed to find some inspiration for my task.

O, what is our great motive? Jesus wants helpers. He wants us to help him save the world. He wants us to go across the sea. He wants us to go across the street, he wants us to go across the aisle of our church, he wants us to go some-

where—not a long journey it may be—but somewhere, to preach his gospel. And our great inspiration and motive must be our love for Jesus Christ.

Jesus said: “Simon Peter, if you love me, do this for me; feed my lambs. I am about to leave them. I cannot do it any more. I have not failed while here. I have not failed to go across any sea, after any difficult day’s work, no matter whether there was a storm upon the sea—I have gone. And now I must go. Feed my sheep for me.” And that must have been a great inspiration.

In one of our Washington galleries is a picture with which we are familiar—either having seen the original or one of the many prints of it—of an old man seated in a dory, his hands upon an oar; his face has been weathered by a thousand storms; his arms are gnarled and hardened by pulling at the oar. But seated by his side is a little miss of four or five summers, and her tiny hand is likewise upon the oar, and the picture is called “The Helper.” O brothers, what a joy to be a helper of Jesus Christ in the great task! Let us unite in prayer:

Blessed Christ, here are our hands and feet for thee. Here is our church for thee, O Lord. Here are all our churches for thee, that thou mayest

do thy great work; that thou mayest see the travail of thy soul and be satisfied. Thy great passion is the salvation of Africa and Asia and Europe, O Christ, and of South America and of North America, and of the Islands of the sea. O Lord, here is our church, thy church for better service than we have ever rendered before. Let us be helpers of thine, for thy blessed name's sake. Amen.

BISHOP FREDERICK D. LEETE

BISHOP LEETE read as a Scripture lesson Isa. 35. 1-4 and Luke 22. 27-32, and spoke as follows:

We have in the Scriptures two Testaments, each a covenant of God. This morning the lesson comes in part from the one and partly from the other of these Testaments.

Wherever upward, even the lowest round,
Man by a hand's help lifts his feebler brother,
There is the house of God, and holy ground.
The gate of Heaven is love; there is no other.

It is my message even for this morning of our weariness, that the strength which we have is ours for others. How many strong hands the world has had, from which have come benefits incalculable! Some of them have shaped affairs of state. It was no hands of weakness that wrested the charter from King John, and they were not feeble hands that laid the foundations of the government which we possess. How many strong hands have wrought for us in literature, so that the ages are rich with wonderful thoughts, and with high and holy inspirations. How splendid have been the hands of scientists, dis-

coverers, mechanics and inventors! What achievements have they wrought, and how great are the benefits which to-day we enjoy as if the world had always had these things, and as if they came to us without effort.

How many strong hands we have in this magnificent gathering! A visitor sitting in the gallery has been watching the proceedings day after day. I have known him for thirty years. He has remarked, though he does not know that I am aware of it, to those who have been sitting about him, "See those hands go up." It has inspired him as we have been voting, and as hands have been lifted, over and over again he has said, "See those hands go up." Since I heard that, I have been thinking about it. How many hands in this great body have made laws for mighty commonwealths. How many hands among us, with skill, patience, and fortitude, have performed the most delicate and difficult operations by which human life has been preserved. How many in this gathering have penned sermons which have been used by Almighty God for the salvation of men! How many hands of consecrated laymen we have here that have been reaching out, not unfairly but justly, after treasure, not for themselves but for the kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ!

Thank God for the strong hands of this strong

body! It is a splendid thing that these hands are here to go up in voting that the interests of the Kingdom of God may be safely conserved. And how fortunate it is that we have strong hands with which to go down after this high privilege has exhausted itself for the time being, to take hold of life once more, and to do the work necessary for the building of the Kingdom. But, brothers, what we came here for, and what we shall go hence for, after all, is not simply to exert strength in mighty efforts, but that we may impart strength to others. The supreme question is not how much strength have we, but are we good conductors of the power of God. Strengthen ye the weak hands. All power cometh from God, but God imparts his strength through human instrumentalities, and it is our business, and our holy privilege, to pass on any strength we may possess. We should desire above all things that, by the grace of God, we may be able to help other men to be strong and their hands to do mighty deeds of love, and their hearts to express themselves in those acts which many men would like to perform, but know not how.

This morning, in the first place, I plead with all, with myself and yourselves, to strengthen the hands of labor. We have had a great discussion, well worthy such a body as this, about labor. I would like to throw this little note into the dis-

cussion, which I think might properly have gone into it before, that our Book Concern, about which something was said, anticipated the demands of union labor by giving its employees certain privileges to the asking of which the unions at that time had not come. It is no small glory to Methodism that we have been to some extent anticipating those things, and have outrun the demands, even of organized labor, in trying to benefit the help that we have. That is the business of the Christian church, and it is the duty of every Christian man.

In the epoch-making work by Benjamin Kidd, *Social Evolution*, one of the truest things that ever were said was illustrated and proved over and over, that the benefits which have come to labor during the recent century have come not simply as the result of agitation, not simply because of force on the part of organized unions of laboring men, however valuable they have been, and however great has been their share in the achievements of this time. Much of the good which has come to the world has been produced by the slow inworking in the hearts of men of the Christian principle of altruism, which has led men of power to say, "This belongeth not to us alone, but also unto other men." I believe in my soul that in future also the great benefits will come by a similar process, rather than by any

external force, however wisely directed or justly conceived.

Let us strengthen the hands of labor. If you employ men, help them to labor, and help them to love, that they may labor better. Help them so to labor that they may have a large share of the fruits of their toil, and encourage them in their labor that they may find in it not drudgery but joyfulness and kindness of heart.

Strengthen the weak hands of generosity. How hard it is for some people to give! And those who are trying to be givers have not always the help which a very wise woman gave to a very stingy husband. He was a man who was so near as to be close-to. But this good woman desired a large and better husband, so she praised him when he paid his just and honest bills, she praised him when he looked after the common wants of his family, she praised him when he did that which the law would have compelled him to do had he not been willing to do it otherwise. She kept on applauding him for liberality and generosity until by and by he became so used to her approval that he could not get along without it. She transformed him into a man of generosity by her constant praise.

We can praise people into many virtues, but we can never drive them. Let us therefore encourage those who have the spirit of generosity

and kindness, of love and good will. But especially, brothers, let us strengthen the weak hands of righteousness. How many want to do right, but there is a law of weakness in their members. It is hard for them to accomplish that which is the very ideal of their heart. I glory in this, among other facts, concerning the church of Jesus, that it is not a society of the sanctified alone. I glory in the church that it is not a collection of persons perfect in all their reactions to the opportunities of life. I glory in the Christian church that, after all, it is a hospital, in which we have some skilled physicians, and some bright-robed nurses who minister with all the sweetness of woman's loving heart. Thank God, we have also in the church some bruised and broken bodies, some wan and pallid faces, some struggling, imperfect souls that are reaching up into a righteousness which they do not possess. Strengthen ye the weak hands of the feeble folk in the Church of God.

Some years ago a relative of my own had a fault, which he escaped at times for weeks and months, but then was tripped again. He was a member of the church, and underneath all, like Peter when the Lord asked him over and over, "Lovest thou me?" down in his heart he did have the love of God. The church bore with him, and held fast to him. Once in a while the

stronger men in the church said a word of cheer to him. Finally God so strengthened him that he mastered the temptation of his life. Then he used to stand in the prayer meeting of that old church and say: "Brothers, I want to thank the church that when I was disgracing her she held on to me. I would have been in hell had it not been for the mercy and greatness of the church."

"Strengthen ye the weak hands, and confirm the feeble knees. Say to them that are of a fearful heart, 'Be strong.'" You will recall the incident—it is in the histories—of General Chaffee at the battle of El Caney. As he was inspecting the forces, the bullets zipping about him in every direction, he saw a soldier lying face down in a trench: "Why are you lying there?" he called.

"I am scared," the soldier answered.

"What business have you in the army, if you are frightened like that?" Then he looked up at the upturned face, and saw it was that of a boy of only eighteen years, who ought to have been at home with his mother. The General said: "I would like to find the man that put you in the army. But it isn't half as dangerous as you think it is. Just stand up by my side, and I will stand by you." Then the weak mortal stood up by the side of his Commander, and at his direction trained his gun and fired point-blank into the air. The general said: "That was pretty

good, but your hands are trembling. We will try again. Lower your gun a little more."

He lowered the weapon, and this time he fired straight ahead, and it is said that when retreat was ordered a little later, they had to take the boy by the collar, and drag him away. He had become a soldier, because a soldier had given strength to his weakness.

Would that God might help us, first to get strength where alone it may be had, and then to impart it to others. Let us pray.

O Lord, our God, strengthen thou the hands of our weakness, for even though we have some strength, we have also some weakness. Heavenly Father, do thou grant so to strengthen us that our lives may be strength unto others, and to the Kingdom of God. Underneath all and above all we love the Church of Christ, and the Methodist Church. Help us of the church that we may make the Kingdom of God stronger, and our brethren more useful. We ask in Jesus name. Amen.

BISHOP WILBUR P. THIRKIELD

AFTER reading as a Scripture lesson Psalm 139, Bishop Thirkield spoke as follows:

The great word of Scripture that I would have us all take to our hearts this day is: "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear [reverence] him; and he will show them his covenant." The peril of our modern life is worldliness; not worldliness manifest merely in sensual, outbreaking sins, but, rather, in our being submerged in that which is narrow, near, little, trivial, temporal, and worldly. Wordsworth put it this way: "The world is too much with us. Early and late, getting and spending, we lay waste our powers." Paul's warning word is "The god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not [that is, see not], lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ who is the image of God, should shine unto them."

Let us address ourselves to the thought this morning: How shall we be delivered from the narrow, the near, the little, the temporal, the trivial, the worldly—be lifted up out of the valley into the heights, where we shall get new visions, and the true perspective of life—lifted up into

companionship with the great, the universal, the spiritual, the enduring?

If we would thus get a vision of the larger life, let us first have a vision of God. That prophet in the mountain saw God in the burning bush, and heard his voice, and endured as seeing the invisible. Isaiah caught the vision, and in it found his call and his consecration. That is a great word: "I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee." God appeared unto man. He is still appearing. And that which will lift us out of the narrow, the mean, and trivial into the larger and diviner atmosphere of life is this vision of God.

This vision will lift us into a spirit of reverence. It is Dr. Jowett who says that people who live under great domes acquire a stately and noble habit of life, and that which is mean, trivial, and earthly drops away from them. I would that we might ever live under the dome of a reverent sense of the presence of God. Gladstone in his day said, "The decay of reverence is the most startling feature of our modern life." In the early years of the church superstition entered in at one door of the church, and now in our later days irreverence is shouldering in at the other.

Hear me, men. If the choice be between irreverence and superstition, give me superstition, for as the devout Neander once said, "Superstition may pave the way to faith," but you and I know that irreverence leads to narrowness, hardness, and shallowness of soul, extirpating the capacity for the Divine. That which enriches and deepens our lives is the spirit of reverence in the presence of God. "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear [reverence] him, and he will show them his covenant." This means that there are large reaches of divine truth that can be revealed only to the reverent and devout spirit.

I come with a plea for reverence for God's house. I would that when we come to the house of God for worship, instead of looking around and conversing, we might reverently bow our heads in the sanctuary of God and seek his presence. The church has become the center of great reform movements. Blessed be God that they have their inspiration and power from the church; but let us save the sacred service of Sunday, that it may be pervaded by the spirit of reverence which the atmosphere of God's house demands. At a sacred service of ordination on Sunday afternoon, after the impressive service had been carried out, and a great address had been given, by which our hearts were lifted into the very presence of God, thoughtless men and

women applauded—not because they meant to be irreverent, but from the habit that is growing in the church. Let us keep God's house sacred to his worship, and his sanctuary holy. "The Lord is in his holy temple: let all the earth keep silence before him." What we need in the rush and tumult of our modern life are the great silences before God.

I plead for the spirit of reverence for God. How often is God's name profaned by the careless taking of that name in vain! Old Dr. Boyle used to pause visibly before using the name of God. The Roman Catholics every year march, hundreds of thousands of them in various cities, under the banner of the "Holy Name Society." I would, brethren, that in our churches we might have Holy Name Societies leading us to reverence God's name, that too often we take carelessly and irreverently upon our lips.

I plead for reverence for God's Holy Word. Phillips Brooks has well said that there are passages of God's Word that have been forever soiled and profaned by the irreverent touch of man. Have you not heard the language of God's Holy Word used—yea, even the sacred words uttered upon the cross—to point a pun, or to round a joke? Let us keep holy God's blessed Word.

I plead for the spirit of reverence in prayer. Prayer is nothing, if it is not the most august

act of the human soul—the finite spirit bared to the infinite, man with open soul in the presence of God. And yet how the holy hour of prayer is sometimes profaned by irreverence. I have heard sometimes in the pulpit, while prayer was being made to God, the turning of leaves of a hymnal or the making of arrangements for the rest of the service that had not been thought out and ordered before hand. A member of this Conference told me of a rebuke that came to him in his early ministry. There was a rank unbeliever in his town, almost an atheist. One night at a revival service he was surprised and delighted to find him there. Asking a brother to pray, he went to talk with him, while seeking ones were bowing at the altar. Going around to the back of the man, he leaned over and began to approach him as to his soul's welfare. The man lifted his hand and said: "Hush! Hush! That man is talking with God." O may prayer be to us more sacred and reverential, may we bow before him as we talk with God!

But the basis of all true reverence, my friends, is really reverence for one-self, for the dignity and nobility of one's nature created in the divine image. There is a great word of Milton which Canon Farrar said had exercised a larger influence over his life than any sentence in all literature: "He that holds himself in reverence

and due esteem, both for the dignity of God's image upon him, and for the price of his redemption which he thinks to be visibly stamped upon his forehead, accounts himself both a fit person to do the noblest and godliest deeds, and too much worth to deject or to defile with such a debasement and such a pollution as sin is, *himself*, so highly ransomed and ennobled into a new friendship and filial relation with God."

Reverence yourself. You are the temple of God. Nobler than any cathedral of Milan or Rheims or Cologne is the cathedral of man's spirit. Brothers, in the cathedral there is a choir, whence holy anthems fill the temple. In the cathedral there is an altar whence prayers ascend. What has been going on in your cathedral this morning? Has the note of sacred hymn and the incense of holy prayer filled your cathedral?

My plea is for a finely sensitive spirit of reverence as the habitual attitude of the soul. The spirit of Him whose soul was full of awe and reverence for all sacred things, and brooding over form and law, he saw the Spirit's wings.

And, my friends, this will lead us into an attitude of meditation. I fear that meditation is almost a lost art.

"Use some time to be alone, see what thy soul doth wear," sang holy George Herbert. And yet in this modern day of the telephone, and the mad,

onward rush of things, men do not take time to be alone. Let us remember that solitude is the royal atmosphere of thought. Solitude is the breeding place of spiritual power. Solitude, in the fine word of Tennyson, is the home-land of the strong.

Let us meditate on God. One morning, Mary Ninde, the daughter of our saintly Bishop Ninde, suddenly thrust open the library door and was startled as she saw her father there with a luminous, fixed gaze, his face suffused with light. Startled, she said, "What is it, father?"

"O," said he, "I was just thinking about God."

Men and women, we need to think more about God.

O, utter but the name of God
Down in thy heart of hearts,
And see how from the world at once
All tempting light departs.

Meditate on God. Meditate upon God's Holy Word. Brother ministers, we are to feed the people. Who is to feed the minister? Who, but God, through his Holy Word? Meditate upon that Word, not only that we may teach it in the Sunday school, or in the pulpit, but meditate upon the Word, that we may enrich and deepen and spiritualize our own life.

"I know the Bible is divine," cries Coleridge,

"because it finds me." It finds me. It is the revealer of personality. O if day by day we could open the morning hour with the psalmist and cry out, "Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting."

The larger reaches of the spiritual life are before him who is not merely contending with his sins or pleading against his sins, but overcoming them by the expulsive power of a divine affection, being led, led out and on into the way everlasting.

Meditate upon the Word. Think of that great word of Browning:

Press God's lamp close to thy breast,
Its splendors soon or late shall pierce the gloom;
I shall emerge some day.

Brothers, would you emerge out of the narrow, the near, the temporal, the sensuous, the earthly, the worldly? Would you emerge out of the valley into the heights where you get a new vision of the larger things beyond, and a true perspective of life, where these little, earthly things take their true relation, beneath your feet? Would you emerge out of the mean and low into companionship with the spacious, the universal, the holy? Would you emerge into the larger and diviner life? Then "Press God's lamp close to

thy breast. Its splendors soon or late shall pierce the gloom." Thou shalt emerge! Emerge out of the narrow and mean and earthy! Emerge into the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear [reverence] him, and he will show them his covenant."

O God, our Father, thou art here. We need not seek thee, for thou art seeking us, and we are ever in thy presence. May we be in such attitude of soul that we shall ever know that thou art near; that thou art within us; that thou art guiding us in all our thoughts and in all that we do. O God, save us from the tumult and the wild, mad rush of this modern life of ours. May we take time to be alone with thee. May we covet the great silences of the soul, and hear thy word, "Be still, and know, in the secret chambers of thy being, that I am God!" Do thou breathe upon us, gracious God, thy Spirit this day, and may every act and thought of the day be as worship unto thee, and for the glory of thy name. And may it be found worthy to be built up into the permanent kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. We ask it in his name and for his sake. Amen.

BISHOP RICHARD J. COOKE

BISHOP COOKE chose a few verses from the second chapter of Ephesians for a Scripture lesson, and spoke as follows:

The Spirit of God is the spirit of life. What is life? There is no definition quite satisfactory to the scientist or philosopher. Herbert Spencer's definition of life was, "Constant adjustment of internal conditions to external relations." But that is also a definition of an engine on rails. We know life only by its manifestations. By studying the revelations of itself we come to know life. Life has assimilative power; it transforms dead matter into living matter. Life has building power; this is the quintessence of life. Life is constructive; it never pulls down. Life endeavors to embody for itself an organism through which to expand itself. It is like leaven.

The Spirit of God is the Spirit of life, the Spirit that builds, the Spirit that constructs and out of the chaotic elements brings life and order and beauty. The Spirit of God ever seeks to embody itself, trying to build, as it were, a body for itself,

as no doubt the spirit of man itself will build out of the elements a spiritual body. As life seeks to embody itself and to build for itself an organism through which it can work and so expand the rim of its reign, of its influence, so the Spirit of God seeks to embody himself; to embody himself in the universe, seeking to work out his own thought, the essential ideas of God concerning the universe itself.

But it has, of course, resistance, as all life has resistance in matter, matter endeavoring ever to resist the upbuilding, constructive power of the spirit. But the time will come when matter itself will surrender to the reign of spirit, when it will not be an organ of resistance, but of assistance, when it will be so penetrated by the spiritual power that it will become the ready, quick, respondent agent of the will, of the thought, of Spirit, and the whole universe of God likewise will become shot through and through with the spiritualizing power of the Spirit of God. "For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaleth in pain together, waiting for the unveiling of the sons of God."

Now, the Spirit of God is ever endeavoring to embody itself, but being the Spirit of life and the Spirit of mind, it seeks to embody itself in mind. So it builds itself into literature, and tries to build itself into science, directing the

power, the thought, the mind, the will of every century; tries to build itself into the thought and institutions of every age. But, above all things, it endeavors to build itself into the things which are like itself, that is, the souls of men. By transforming men here and there, bringing them out of the disorder and the chaos of sin, out of the multiplicity of units into one unit, it builds them up into a holy temple unto the Lord. The Church of Jesus Christ becomes the temple of the Holy Ghost. The Holy Spirit of the church, living in the church as the soul lives in the body and directs its movements, so the Spirit of the Living God finds its home in the church, and the Church becomes no longer a human institution, no longer a mere society, but the body of the Lord, the divine organ through which the spirit of God may work upon the great mass of human society.

Through the Spirit of God, through the Church of God reforming society, sweetening society, building society until the whole world becomes the Church of God, it is through the church that the world can be redeemed, and by the Church of God only. Not science, not education, not literature, not art, not any or all the devices of men can save the world, for they are all on the plane of the human, and can never lift us above the human. It is the superhuman, the supernatural

element taking possession of the human that can lift it into a redeemed state before the Lord Jesus Christ.

Therefore the Church of God is the one and the only real organ of God for the reformation and the redemption of human society. The Church of God which shows the most sides to humanity, which touches humanity on the most sides, that is the church through which the Holy Ghost can do the most work. The church that shows a friendly attitude toward education and toward literature, and toward science and toward art and toward all the finer things of human life, that is the church through which the constructive Spirit of God can work, for the field of the Spirit is the field of humanity, and the Church of God must be the church of humanity, if it would save humanity.

"O," they say, "the church is broken. The church has failed. The church cannot redeem humanity. The church has broken down." No, the church has not broken down. The mere state church, which is nothing but a rubber stamp for political power, that could not be designated as a fit organ for the Holy Ghost, for it is not the will of the Holy Ghost that operates through such churches, but the will of political power—it has not broken down. Out of the terrible maelstrom, out of this frightful chaos of the nations,

out of the night will come a new nation, a church purified, unified, conscious of its failure to express the mission of the Spirit. I am of the opinion that if the churches in Europe, instead of being merely political institutions, had been thoroughly penetrated through and through with the light and power of the Holy Ghost, the fields of Europe would not be bathed in the crimson blood of her peoples.

Why is it that we in America do not shout over their victories? Why do we not throw up our hats when one nation destroys another? Because, somehow or another, we have had a different concept of religion. The Spirit of the living God has spiritualized our churches and our thought and we are thinking of the Holy Ghost, and we are held in restraint because of this blessed, holy influence in all our churches. We are not thinking of the men who crowd Regent Street or the Strand, or Piccadilly shouting "God Save the King." We are not thinking of people crowding Unter den Linden singing "Deutschland Uber Alles" or "The Watch on the Rhine." We are not listening to the "Marseillaise" in the great squares of Paris. No, we are thinking of the time when all men will gather together and sing not "The Watch on the Rhine," nor "Deutschland Uber Alles," nor the "Marseillaise," nor "God Save the King," but when they will all sing,

"All hail the power of Jesus' Name!
Let angels prostrate fall.
Bring forth the royal diadem,
And crown Him Lord of all."

The churches of God have no country. The Church of God has its redemptive side toward humanity.

But what is the Church of God? The Church of God is composed of units, and the Church of God is just as responsive to the inspiration of the Holy Ghost in proportion as the members of the church are responsive. As the units are so is the body. And the Church of God is called to be a holy church. If holy, it becomes responsive to the Spirit, and the Spirit can work through it, and the Spirit can inspire it, and there shall arise prophets and singers and master thinkers and master builders because the spirit of the living God is in the church inspiring it by its presence; and there shall spring forth holy men and holy women who will think big things and dream large dreams and build large kingdoms because of the constructive power of the inspiring Spirit of the Lord God which dwells in the church.

But the church whose membership is lacking in responsiveness to the Holy Spirit, that church will become a dead church. It will have no response in it to the whisperings of the Holy Ghost, "Wherefore," says God, "be ye holy, for I

am holy." As the membership is so is the church. As the unit is, so is the whole membership. And if we to-day would become a reforming, transforming power in America, this is everlastingly the truth, it is a call from God to the Church "to sanctify yourselves." "Wash me and make me clean." Put aside all worldly things. Let there be holiness unto the Lord, until the very bells of the horses shall keep time with the music, "Holiness unto the Lord." Every man a prayerful man, every man Spirit-filled, every man in communion with the Holy Ghost, so that God might build us all into a habitation of God, for as you are, as I am, so will the church be. If we are unholy, if we are unclean, if we are negligent, so will the church lose its responsiveness. O that the baptism of the Holy Ghost might come down upon our Methodism, that she might respond to the Spirit of God and become the organ of God to accomplish her great mission in the world.

BISHOP FRANCIS J. McCONNELL

BISHOP McCONNELL read as a Scripture lesson the 21st chapter of Revelation, and spoke as follows:

Let me repeat the latter part of the 23d verse of this 21st chapter of the book of Revelation: "And the Lamb is the light thereof." Of course, we all know that this book of Revelation is written in the language of Oriental symbolism, and that some of the symbols are very hard for us to interpret. The key to the meanings of some parts of the book of Revelation has been lost, and very likely will never be found; but there are some parts of the book that are very clear in their significance, and this particular passage, "the Lamb is the light thereof," is very clear. All that this means is that Christ considered as the sacrifice—the sacrificial work of Christ—is the glory of the city, and it gives light to the city, so that there is no need of sun or of moon to shine in it. This is simply the ordinary thought, the rather commonplace thought that we have in mind when we say that back of light there has to be burning—that back of a glow of any kind that really takes hold of men's minds there

has to be some kind of sacrifice to give power to the light, and make it carry into the hearts and minds of men. Now, that is one of those commonplace conceptions that we are everlastingly getting away from and forgetting about. The Master said to his disciples, "Ye are the light of the world." Very often we interpret those words as if they meant just a sort of amiable good humor and spirit of happiness shining forth from a radiant face, without any suggestion of the intensity of the sacrifice that lies back of any light that is really worth while. We look at our sun, and what do we see? Well, viewed from a distance it seems complacent enough, and the sunshine comes down upon the earth in the most gracious and gratifying manner; but back of the light that comes down upon our eyes, that streams through the windows and makes life worth living there is tremendous combustion and catastrophe. If we could stand at the center of the system, we would find there a tremendous catastrophe in the way of a consumption and burning that sends the light down upon our eyes. And so in the Christian system the light that is to come graciously and gratifyingly upon the minds of men, that is to quicken everything and make everything possible, that is the great, indispensable prerequisite to everything that is worth while, is possible only as there is great sacrifice back of it. And I think

that we, as we look forward to another quadrennium, and think of the tasks that confront us at the very ends of the earth, may as well realize that light, after all, is something very intense. We say a good deal about living the Christian life, and letting the light shine on its own account. That is well and good, and we know what we mean; but sometimes we forget that the light will not carry very far unless it comes out of a life of sacrifice.

Now, in these days we take a good many things as a matter of course. We take the sunshine as a matter of course, and forget the cost at which it comes to this earth. Light is just about the costliest fact in the physical universe. Light is possible only as systems waste away; and so it is about a great many other things in this world. We talk about learning, liberty, liberty enlightening the world, the light of knowledge, and all that, as if those things simply came in the way of a good natured kind of shining down upon our minds. The fact is that they only come by somebody paying for them, somebody setting himself on fire to get them down to us, somebody willing to give himself as a sacrifice that the light may come to us.

All the lights of this world that are worth while are the lights of altar fires—that is, somebody giving himself in sacrifice for the sake of the light

reaching down to us. Why, you can take the commonest facts of our common knowledge and somebody had to pay for them. If I should stand before you this morning and ask you if you believe that the world is round, you would wonder what in the world I meant by such a question. You would say: "That is an item of common knowledge. Everybody knows that; everybody takes that for granted. The child understands that as soon as he takes his first lesson in geography. Of course the world is round." That is what would happen to-day, but there was a time when the belief that the world was round was a pestilent and deadly heresy, both in the mind of the church and of the state; and men dared proclaim that truth only at the risk of their very lives. Somebody had to suffer to get that common item of knowledge down into our daily thinking. We never think of it as anything important. It is a simple and most matter-of-fact part of the common light of the common day knowledge that we have; and yet somebody had to pay for it.

We take our liberty as a matter of course. In these days we hear men talking about liberty as if it simply came as a matter of course, as a thing of itself, simply being one of God's good blessings—and it is—coming down upon us. Everybody recognizes that it is one of God's blessings, but it

is also as clear that liberty has been possible for us, such measure of liberty as we have, only as men have been willing to give themselves—sometimes even give their bodies literally to be burned—that the light of liberty might reach down to men. Back of all the blessings of civilization there stands sacrifice somewhere. At the center of every system there stands a burning sun which not only sends forth its light, but gives itself in sacrifice as the light comes to men. Now, it seems to me that as we think of our work there is something to be borne in mind here.

Take the proclamation of the truth. We say of a sermon, "It is light." Well, what is the kind of light that really carries, that quickens men's minds? The only kind of light that really carries is the light that comes out of the spirit of self-sacrifice. There are some men whose sermons glow with a certain kind of magnetic vitality, almost physical vitality. You come to hear them speak, and you feel the better for catching the glow of their vitality; but that does not last long. There are some men whose sermons glow with a kind of intellectual brilliancy. The sermon becomes polished, as we say, and glows with a kind of brilliancy and sparkles with light. But the world will never be saved by sparkles. There is a certain kind of glow that comes to men finding themselves emotionally uplifted, in a kind of

ecstasy. That is well worth while, and is an experience worth having, but it does not carry very far. Sometimes it does not carry even to the man himself, beyond just the moment in which the experience comes.

What does count? What gives the word power? What gives the vital something that makes the speech of some men magnetic? The conviction that men have that this comes out of the sincere life of a man who is ready for self-sacrifice. That is what gives power to what one says. That is the secret of any eloquence worth having. That is the secret of the power of the Christian system. If we drop the cross out of the Christian system, we have dropped out everything worth talking about. Christ was a good preacher, and men have spoken eloquently about him. But the only thing that put back of his words the power that has sent them leaping through the ages to us is the power of his self-sacrificing life, revealed on the cross. He put himself into his words, and went even unto death, and poured himself out unto death that the word might come to us. That is the unique feature of Christianity. Where in any other religious system do you find the Son of God revealing God at the heart of the system? That is where we differ from the heathen systems. They have believed in God; but in their thought God is in-

different except as he is begged or importuned into response. The idea of God such as the old Greeks had, a God sitting on the rim of the universe and looking down with complacency upon this world—that is the heathen conception. The idea of a God whose feelings and whose heart are involved, and who is giving himself as a perpetual burning sacrifice for men, is the heart of Christianity. When that drops out of our preaching the characteristic feature of Christianity drops out. The cross is the center of the Christian system, and stands there forever as the revelation of the heart of God himself.

I read once of an artist who was desirous of painting the picture of the three crosses on Calvary. He painted first the face of the unrepentant thief; that was easy, for he had seen many men like that. Then he painted the face of the repentant thief, upon whose face the light was breaking as he got the glimpse from the other world. That was harder, for he had never seen a face of just that kind. But after weeks and months of endeavor he was measurably satisfied. Then he painted the central cross and the central face. He tried day after day, week after week, month after month, to paint that face, but failed. Then in despair he seized his brush, and simply put upon that central cross one great burst of light—and he could not have done anything more

inspired than that if he had worked a thousand years. That is what it is—a great burst of light. There was the agony; and out of that comes the light that reaches down to you and me.

An old Roman said, when the Christian system was being introduced: "This system cannot stand because it is founded upon a cross, upon the death of its own leader, upon a catastrophe; it cannot stand." That is just why it does stand. It stands because it is founded upon the spirit of self-sacrifice, upon the throne of a God who is willing to give himself with a perpetual burning that he may stand at the center of this system, not for the glory that will come to him, but that out of his suffering and sorrow the light may reach to the sons of men. "The Lamb is the light thereof." The self-sacrificing Son of God is the light thereof. The new Jerusalem cannot come in this world, the needed social reorganizations cannot come, the redemption of the nations cannot come, until the spirit of self-sacrifice has spread abroad everywhere. It is your part and my part to put ourselves, by the grace of God, who is the chief burden bearer, where we can make the Lamb the light of this world. Let us join in prayer.

May thy blessing be upon the word that has been spoken. We thank thee for the cross of Christ. In that cross we shall glory forever.

And while we cannot understand it, and while we can frame no theory that will satisfy ourselves, and while it seems a hardship to us to take up thy cross, may we nevertheless realize that in some fashion out of the burning life there comes the light of life, and out of our self-sacrifice there comes the light that reaches to all thy children. Be with us through this day and through all the days. And may the light of the self-sacrificing Son of God become the light of our lives. We ask thee in Christ's name.

BISHOP HERBERT WELCH

BISHOP WELCH read as the Scripture lesson John 17. 11-19, and spoke as follows:

I should like to stop on these words for a few minutes—"for their sakes I sanctify myself." It is surely not necessary in this company to define the word "sanctify." I have not been able to forget the definition which I heard twenty-five years ago from the lips of Hugh Price Hughes, when, speaking to an American audience, he said that *entire sanctification is an intense desire not to have your own way.* The word "sanctify," I suppose, means properly to separate, to set apart, to set apart for a purpose, to set apart for a high and holy purpose. But the special thing which interests me in these words of our Lord is the motive which he suggests for such sanctification.

The trouble with very many lives seems to me to be, not that they are not honorable and clean, but that they are wrongly centered. There are some who are idle, luxurious, self-indulgent; there are others equally self-centered who are eager, ambitious, heroic. But the latter type of life is surely as far from the model of Jesus

Christ as the first. The life that moves inward and upward, but does not move outward, is not after the divine pattern. I suppose no man who lived on a desert island in solitude could be a real Christian. No matter how godly a man he might be, he could never be like Jesus Christ, unless he had men to practice his Christianity on. So many of the virtues of the Christian life are social virtues. The hermit lift, the secluded life, be it ever so holy in its aspiration, is not the typical Christian life.

It seems to me that in our Christian preaching we have sometimes appealed too strongly to the individualistic motive: sometimes to the motive of fear, pleading with men to become Christians because of some terror that lies ahead of them; pleading with men to become Christians that they may escape something dreadful and that they may gain something glorious. It has been a disheartening fact in many of our ministries that these appeals have in the modern world lost very much of their force. There is a terror of the Lord which should constrain men; yet men are not so easily moved by it as in the old days.

But just when some of these individualistic motives are losing their power over men's hearts and consciences, it is a joyous fact that the social motive is taking their place, that we are coming

to understand the social content of goodness and the social motive to goodness, and that these motives in our time are leading men to repeat the words of Jesus Christ: "Not for my own sake—not simply for the sake of a heaven that I may win, or a hell that I may shun—but for their sakes I sanctify myself."

The call of humanity is being heard as never before. The cry of physical need and misery, the cry of ignorance and superstition, the cry of spiritual bondage is coming into the ears of men and summoning them to Christlike service as never before in the history of our world.

Here is a young man. The temptations of lust are hot upon him. Men come to him and tell him of the dreadful personal results that he will suffer if he sins against the law of chastity; but in his bravado he cares very little about the possible consequences of his sin. But the motive that does grip the hearts of young men to keep them pure is the social motive. "Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed thereto, according to thy word." What is thy word? Thy word is "love." For the sake of that other who might be trampled in the mud, and for the sake of the wife and the children that are to be, many a young man heeds to-day the New Testament injunction, "Keep thyself pure." "For their sakes I sanctify myself."

Here are older people who feel the tug of sensuality. Prurient curiosity, and sometimes such performances as I have understood the artistic Russian ballet to be, make an appeal to their senses that seems irresistible; using the forms of art to befoul human hearts and souls—not simply art for art's sake, but art for nastiness' sake—an excuse for decent people to give way to their lower desires without being counted out of good society. What are you going to say to people assailed by such motives? If you tell them of the harm it will work to themselves, they say, "I think it will have no permanently bad effect upon me." But ask them what effect it has upon the community, and upon the performers; and plead with them, not for their own sakes, but for the sake of fragile souls for whom Christ died, to abstain from every form of evil. "For their sakes I sanctify myself."

I take it that one of the great objects of Jesus Christ was to make the family conception of life universal. What will a mother not do for the sake of her child! What will a brother not do for the sake of his brother! Let us carry the spirit of the family out into the industrial world, and into all the relations of our social life. Let us keep saying to ourselves, "Not for myself, not for the sake of some high and satisfactory state of grace which I may enjoy, and sit

and sing myself away to everlasting bliss; but for the sake of being the best man that I can be—to bring myself to my best for what I may do for others; to be clean, that I may cleanse the lives of other men; to be intelligent, that I may bring light to darkened minds; to be holy, that I may help others to be holy—I sanctify myself, that I may be a worthy offering to be laid upon their altar of service!"

Our heavenly Father, we bless thee for the gospel of Jesus Christ which appeals, not to the base, the small, the selfish that there is in us, but to the larger and nobler motives. We thank thee that Jesus Christ within us turns our hearts toward our fellow men. O that we may love like thee! O that we may have thy passion for men! O that we may see the needs of the world as thou dost see them, and in the very spirit of our Master give ourselves to prayer and service, becoming all things to all men, if by any means we may save some! We ask it in Jesus' name. Amen.

BISHOP THOMAS NICHOLSON

BISHOP NICHOLSON spoke as follows:

Let us think together for a few moments on this very familiar verse in the 1st Chapter of Acts: "But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you; and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judæa, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth."

I suppose that we might speak of power as energy sufficient to produce a desired effect. I think that is entirely commensurate with what the Master had in mind in the utterance of these words. We have a great task. If you will look out on this world, and count all the forces of evil that are against us, all the forces of Mohammedanism, all the forces of great moral evils, such as the white-slave traffic, the liquor traffic, and all the evils that I might mention, it seems like an appalling task to Christianize this world and lay it at the feet of the Master. "But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you." Now, I believe profoundly in machinery. We all believe in organization. We believe in a trained ministry, and we need our schools as we never needed our schools before.

We need our theological schools better endowed than ever we have had them, more modernized and more efficient than ever they have been before. We need to make a minute survey on scientific principles of every great problem in the country and in the city.

We need our great benevolent boards, and we need to put at the head of them the very best men, the best-trained men, the most far-visioned men that we can get. We believe in all that; but, believing in that, and emphasizing that as we have in this General Conference, and as the church is increasingly doing, let us not forget, after all, that these alone will not—and there is no promise that they ever can—accomplish the task we have in hand. “Ye shall receive power to vitalize your machinery, to electrify the whole concern, after that the Holy Spirit has come upon you.”

I am deeply impressed, as I study the Old Testament and New Testament alike, with the constantly recurring emphasis on this fact. Take that familiar incident in the Old Testament—Elisha multiplying the widow’s cruse of oil. You remember what occurred. Famine was in the land, and dire distress had come to the individuals of this household. The call came to the prophet of God, and he came in, and said, “What hast thou in thy house?” Everything that he did

was conditioned on and upon the basis of what they brought to him, and what they did. They said, "Nothing." Their forces seemed entirely insignificant, but he said, "Bring it." Then he said, "Go out and get vessels."

You know the incident. I need not recite it to you. But they went through all the motions, they went through all the tasks, they created the machinery; and in faith they put down their vessels to receive the oil. I suppose that if an unspiritual onlooker had been there no miracle at all could have appeared to him. Take the incident in the New Testament: a great crowd pressed upon the Master. He said, "Give them to eat." Philip said: "Whence shall we buy bread? We have nothing but a few pennyworths. Here is a lad with half a dozen biscuits and a couple of herring, but what are they?" The Master said: "You create the machinery. You get these people down companies by companies. You take this food and you pass it out."

I suppose to the superficial observer, without doubt, it would look just like the waiters down here in the hotel. He would not see the source of supply, and he would not know. They went through all the motions, they went through the task of creating the machinery, and somehow, in a curious way that no outsider understood, the process of which only God himself knew, there

was enough from those biscuits and herring to feed the five thousand, besides the women and children, and to have the baskets full of fragments to pass over.

Now, my friends, this has been a great General Conference. We have done a great deal of earnest work. We have passed a great deal of good legislation, and probably we have passed as little poor legislation in proportion to the total volume of legislation as any General Conference in the history of the church. At least, that is my judgment. We are going out with a new impetus, with this Episcopal Board reenforced by a large number of vigorous young men, with a new program, a new emphasis on our benevolent boards, on modern methods of investigation and work, on the city problem, and on all these things. But let us pause to remember that we can only receive power to electrify the machinery after that the Holy Spirit has come upon us. That is the great need of this hour and of all the hours that are before us.

You remember that in one of the great expositions—and I think it is practically true of all expositions in kind, if not in detail—they spent months of time and millions of dollars, and gathered together great companies of toilers, who worked unceasingly week in and week out. I was out there almost a year before the San

Francisco Exposition opened. My good friend, Mr. Rolla Watt, took me out when the ground—some of it—was not yet broken for the buildings. Here were hundreds of men, and here were all the plans. He took me into the plan room and showed me what the lighting was to be. I said, “What a great Exposition this is going to be!”

On and on they went, until the morning came when the Exposition was to be opened. The buildings were all there; the machinery was all in order; the lights were all ready to be turned on; but they waited the touch of a button. At the touch of a single button the great currents of electricity coursed through that machinery. Everything was in motion, and the dead organism became a living power. We go out now with our organism in some sense perfected; with all our machinery in good working order; but, “Ye shall receive the touch of living power after that the Holy Spirit is come upon you”; and we are utterly inadequate for all the great task that is set before us, unless we touch the button and turn on the power in a new, living, and vital way. I for one wish we could close this General Conference in an orderly way, with a large part of a session—at least an hour—given to a quiet executive session in which we should wait before God in intercession, and cry mightily to God that we might receive power for the great work

of this quadrennium. I think it would be time well spent.

Look at one other thing. I think there is a little tendency in this day and generation to forget and to minimize—because it is so quiet and so unobserved, and because we have such improved methods of work—the real contribution of the Spirit of God to our work. But look out at the analogy in nature.

When I first saw the following statement coming from an eminent expositor, I thought, "That is a bit of special pleading," but I have given some investigation, and I believe the statement is correct. A recent writer said that if you go out and study the field of growing grain, after making all allowance for the scattering of the seed, for the plowing of the ground, for the preparation of the soil, for all that man contributes, you will find that ninety-five per cent of the power and force that turns the seed into ripened grain belongs to nature, or—as we prefer to call it—to God; and only five per cent of the total process belongs to man. And if you will think about that, you will find that five or ten per cent is a correct estimate. For it is the power of sunlight, and the power of moisture, and the power of climate, and the power of all these things that God, nature's God, contributes.

And not more marked is, after all, however

much we may sometimes overlook it in our worship of machinery, the percentage of our dependence upon the spirit of the living God for the effects that we need to produce, than is that by which the seed is turned into the ripened grain. And we do well to tarry and wait, as did these disciples, until the power of the Holy Spirit comes upon us.

And so the immediate effect, in these first and second chapters of Acts here, was these disciples gathered in the upper room. Now they had been to school. Peter knew his Joel and knew his psalmist and knew his Old Testament—he knew all that. He knew the facts of the life of Jesus. He, together with the other disciples, had been in the school of Christ for three years, more or less—whatever you decide that period was—he had been under the Master Teacher, and yet he and his associates a few hours before had been inquiring what the rising from the dead could possibly mean. And they had all forsaken him and fled, and they had denied him. But the Master said, “You go and wait a little season,” and they waited in that upper chamber, and the Holy Spirit came upon them. And what was the effect? Peter saw in his Joel, Peter saw in his psalmist, Peter saw in the Old Testament he had learned in the rabbinical school from his boyhood, what he had never seen before. And in

the second chapter of Acts he weaves prophet and psalmist and ritualist and the events of the life of Christ into one of the world's greatest orations. It goes straight to the point. "God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ," and to the amazement of the people three thousand men were cut to the heart in a single day and cried out, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?"

"Ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you." And that power will mean new illumination on the pages of the Old Testament and of the New. New illumination upon all we have to do; new light on all our tasks, new courage for our work, new power and new strength.

I have been greatly impressed as these brethren come back from the foreign field, and I listen to their utterances. It is no invidious distinction for the rest of us to say that when Brother Bashford comes from China, and when Brother Thoburn used to come from India, and when Brother Warne comes back there is a strange intensity in their utterances, there seems to be a strange spiritual vision, there seems to be a power to move audiences, that some of the rest of us do not have. You have seen it; you have heard it remarked again and again.

Now, with all due respect to these dearly be-

loved brethren I do not think that they are, *per se*, more pious than the rest of us. I do not think that they are naturally more consecrated than the rest of us, but here is the point: they have gone into blank heathenism, everything aligned about them hostile, everything about them depressing. The force against them is so tremendous that they are overpowered. Sometimes they are in places where there is not a sympathetic voice, not a single sympathetic note, and the only thing they have to do is to look up to God and cry: "O Lord, how long?" and they are driven to a fellowship with God and a dependence upon the Holy Spirit that the rest of us hardly know anything about.

Now, if we can take that same sort of dependence on God into our rural churches, into our cities, into our places, with all our schools about us, with all our Epworth leagues about us, with all these hosts and millions of sympathetic followers about us, with all the hosts of God following in our train, and with the same absolute self-abnegation and dependence upon God we can look up to God and cry unto him with mighty intercession, I believe that the results will astonish those of us who have had even the very best results in the last quadrennium.

And I close with this single elaboration: "Ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost

is come upon you ; and ye shall be witnesses." In other words, there is no promise that you and I shall have more power than that which we have actually proven in our own individual experiences. As goes the individuals, as we have proven the power of God in these regards, so goes the church, and so goes the conquest of all we have before us.

But if ye shall receive power ye shall be witnesses unto him in Jerusalem. Now, what is that? Why, that is where they denied him ; that is where they allowed him to be crucified. That is where all the people knew how weak and wavering and how faithless they had been. "And ye shall receive power and go out into Judæa," where the reports of all this thing have gone, where the perverted reports and all the stories have gone.

And then ye shall go into the uttermost parts of the earth. And no man has the vision of the Christ, no man has the illumination of the Holy Spirit, unless he sees the whole wide world. It is not foreign problems set over against home problems; it is not one board set over against another board; it is not one area set over against another area ; it is not one bishop set over against another bishop; it is not a bit of rivalry and competition to see who can do best and who can get the biggest record in figures—it is one army

of the living God seeing a world in sin, to be brought to the feet of the Master; seeing the fields white unto the harvest, seeing these great cities—and instead of sitting back in listless apathy and saying, "O, it is too bad; the forces against us are too great. What can we do?" we shall say, "We can do it!" Standing up in the strength of God and looking at these great slum districts, and looking at these great world problems, and looking at these great foreign problems, and seeing the harvest, we shall put forth the sickle and reap. Ye shall receive power to nerve your arm, and strength to do your reaping, and strength to bring down the stoutest grain after that the Holy Spirit has come upon you. Let us pray.

Lord God of Hosts, be with us yet—
Lest we forget, lest we forget.

Pour upon us this morning thy Holy Spirit. Spirit of illumination, Spirit of courage, Spirit of inspiration, Spirit of love, Spirit of human brotherhood, Spirit of great Christlike yearning for the souls of men, Spirit of vision to see the whole round world waiting to be laid at the feet of our divine Lord, Spirit of faith, Spirit of power—O God, send them all upon us this morning in the plenitude of thine own powers, for thine own sake. Amen.

BISHOP A. W. LEONARD

BISHOP LEONARD spoke as follows:

The remarks of the morning are based upon the forty-first verse of the first chapter of the Gospel according to Saint John: "He first findeth his own brother Simon, and saith unto him, We have found the Messias, which is, being interpreted, the Christ."

The first two disciples followed Jesus soon after John the Baptist had pointed him out as "the Lamb of God." They did not wait long for an invitation, however, for the Master asked them to go with him to the place where he was stopping. They accepted his invitation and found the Christ for whom they longed. We do not know all that took place in that conversation where, in retirement from the world, they were face to face with the divine Lord. We do know, however, that when they came from that retreat they were satisfied, and the great joy of their life was soon to be expressed in the declaration, "We have found the Messias." Any man who leaves the world and comes face to face with Jesus Christ will find the deepest longing of his heart satisfied, and the joy of his life made full.

The man who went immediately to his own

brother with the declaration, "I have found the Messias," revealed a trait of character worthy of emulation. He waited not for form or ceremony but went directly to his brother declaring he had made a great discovery. It required courage to do that, but his was a courage that originates.

All too frequently there is fear lest we shall break with the methods of the past. I am not urging a careless disregard of the past. Nevertheless, we are frequently prevented from doing our best and accomplishing the most, because of an overmastering fear lest our methods may be a radical departure from the familiar methods of the past. We are constantly debating in our minds whether or not the methods we adopt will meet the approval of men. Up to a certain point such a course is fitting and proper. When, however, adherence to the methods of the past becomes a shackle that binds, then it should be broken. The courage that is born in the soul when Christ is received as the divine Lord will send a man out somewhat reckless of the methods of the past and yet also careful as to his procedure.

We have heard criticisms of one of the greatest evangelists of our day, and possibly neither you nor I could adopt his methods. But, my brethren, I am ready to take my hat off to any man who

so consecrates himself to God and to the cause of Christ that he will be given a courage by that very consecration that will enable him to initiate those movements that will make for the salvation of men and women from sin. When the evangelist Sunday is severely criticized and ministers fold about them their ecclesiastical garments and say, "Mr. Sunday's methods are not refined," let us nevertheless thank God that Billy Sunday, reckless of the methods of the past, but with a divine unction, preaches a gospel that brings men and women to repentance and enables them to find Jesus Christ as their divine Saviour from sin. It was of little moment to the Master whether that invalid, borne upon the shoulders of four men, was brought to his feet through a hole in the roof or a hole in the wall. The important thing was to get the man to the Master's feet. As we go out into the new quadrennium, let us go possessed with a holy daring that will, under divine guidance, give us courage to initiate what is right and what will make for the salvation of men and women from sin.

Again, Andrew revealed a sympathy that communicated the Christ to others. It has been my privilege to be sufficiently in touch with the great throbbing, beating world to know that the thing the Church of God must realize in order to make good is that words are not sufficient. The world

is waiting for the touch of sympathy in the name of Christ, a sympathy that expresses itself in deeds as well as in words. The touch of sympathy was upon Andrew's entire method of procedure.

It was my privilege during the past year to talk with more than seven hundred individuals on the subject of their personal relation to Christ, or on some phase of personal religious life. To more than six hundred of that number I put the direct question, "Will you accept Jesus Christ as your divine Saviour from sin?"

One day my study door opened and there entered a big, brawny man. His face had upon it the marks of sin. He was a bit nervous. I said, "My brother, what is on your heart to-day?"

He hesitated a moment and then said, "I have been coming to your church, and I have come to believe that you are telling me about something that will make my life right."

I said, "What has been your life?"

He replied, "If I may tell you, and you will hold what I say as confidential, I will open to you my heart." After the conversation he said, "You may tell my story where you will," thus I am violating no confidence.

He was a man who, in a certain part of this country, was connected with one of the great feuds. He had seen his father, mother, and two

brothers shot to death in the very dooryard of his parents' home. After this he became reckless of law. It was not very long before he got into serious trouble and it was necessary for him, upon agreement with the authorities, to leave the State. He went to the Boer war, fought through it and was honorably discharged. He went to the Spanish-American War, fought through it and was honorably discharged. He went up to Alaska and "struck it not rich but well." There he met a woman and they agreed to live together as husband and wife, although they were never married. Two children were born to them. They came to Seattle, where they have made their home for five years. The children he said were coming to an age where they were asking questions. Now, this man and the woman with whom he had been living had been attending church, and one day they went home and talked matters over and they said: "We are doing ourselves an injustice, and we are doing an injustice to our children. We will talk the matter over with the pastor and see what can be done."

I said to him, "First, my brother, I desire to waive all this matter of your marriage to this woman to one side, and I wish to ask, "Was your mother a Christian?"

His lip quivered, and he answered: "God bless her memory! She taught us boys to pray."

I said, "What did she teach you to pray?" "I cannot remember, it has been so many years," he replied.

I said, "I wonder if I can help you to remember? Did you ever hear the simple little prayer, 'Now I lay me down to sleep?'" "That's it, that's it," he replied.

I put my hand in his great hand and said: "My brother, the Lord God gave his Son for you. I know and believe that whatever has been your past, Jesus Christ can save you from your sin. Will you kneel and let us have prayer together?"

"I have not prayed for a long time," he said. "You can pray if you will," I replied.

We knelt in prayer, and with my hand in his I offered a brief prayer. His great frame shook with emotion, and he sobbed and cried just like a child, and said, "I cannot pray, I cannot pray."

I said, "Yes you can, and you must pray, my brother."

Then, amidst sobs and tears and with choking voice, he cried, "O God, forgive me!" He bowed his head to the very floor and continued to cry "O God, forgive me, forgive me."

In a little while he arose, took my hand in both of his, and said: "I feel differently. I am going home to tell the woman"—as he called her—"and we are going to be married and give our

lives to Jesus Christ and are coming into the church."

He went home to a group of twelve or fifteen persons of his own class, and out of that number not less than seven have been brought into the church. O, for a sympathy that will communicate the Christ! That is what this world needs. We may make resolutions, but resolutions are no substitute for action. Whenever the Church of God puts herself practically and sympathetically shoulder to shoulder, hand to hand, and side by side with this sinful world, we can win this world for God and for his Christ.

Just one other thought. Accompanying this courage and this sympathy there must be the spirit of humility that will obliterate self. I do not discount the importance of personality. The greatest gift of God to man is personality. But when personality is surcharged by the Holy Spirit humanity sinks out of sight, and Jesus Christ is exalted. And when that comes about in the life of any man, he can go to his brother with the new found joy, and say, "Come and see the man who has washed my sins away." The world will never listen to any preacher's message unless the world knows that the preacher knows that about which he is speaking.

My brethren, one final word. The key to the mass is the man. Take it with you as a final

thought. You will not misunderstand me when I say I am in full sympathy with the great social mind and social conscience and social movements of to-day, and I revel in that kind of activity. But we can never separate the Christ from the crowd and expect the crowd to understand our Christ. Therefore, when we come to this point that we will see that the key to the mass is the man, God will use us in his program for the more speedy bringing on of that day when every knee shall bow and every tongue confess that he is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

BISHOP WILLIAM F. OLDHAM

BISHOP OLDHAM spoke as follows:

I will read the first three verses and the last verse of the 61st chapter of Isaiah.

"The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he bath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn; to appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that he might be glorified. For as the earth bringeth forth her bud, and as the garden causeth the things that are sown in it to spring forth; so the Lord God will cause righteousness and praise to spring forth before all the nations."

The good is constantly the enemy of the best. And an arrested good is always the source and

center and brooding place of all manner of ills. By way of illustration, take the high and holy matter of patriotism. That which in itself is good and a high good, if arrested at the borders of one's own land, becomes the possible brooding place of endless evil. That saying of Decatur's which has been quoted on the school platforms up and down throughout the whole country, "My country, right or wrong," is mere blank paganism. Carl Schurz endeavored to recover it toward the ideals of the New Testament when he said, "My country, right or wrong. If right, to be kept right; if wrong, to be made right." In this you feel instinctively that Decatur's phrase is set somewhat toward the New Testament ideals. My friends, let patriotism become absorption in the idea of one's own land as over against all others and without regard to the royal human brotherhood, and immediately it becomes the center of endless ills. I think that was a very noble saying of Secretary Lansing at the Panama meeting. He said, "Each for all, and all for each." There you have patriotism wedded to human brotherhood. And never, never does patriotism flash with such dazzling brightness as when set in the setting of internationalism.

And it is so with religion. Religion is good, but arrest it anywhere and it becomes at once the brooding ground of ill. Should religion be

merely for me, so that my soul is happy, I feel that I am going to heaven, and all the rest of it? My friends, you can breed a selfishness in the midst of your raptures that may be more destructive of good than your raptures will make for good. May I be permitted, with great humility and some little diffidence, to say that if the spirit of foreign missions, the spirit of concern for the whole human family, had held its place in the thinking of the religions in Europe, this war would have been impossible. I am not saying what is merely academic. Let me illustrate. When this wretched war broke out, in India—a British possession—a body of German missionaries were interned. What was the immediate action of the other missionaries? There was much anger, suspicion, and distrust the round world over; but when it came to the missionary group, what happened? One of the German missionaries, as magnificent a man as God ever sent to India coming from Germany, had established a chain of missions, and there were one hundred men and women there from Germany who were serving God among the poorest in India.

The war came on. All these were interned. The whole mission was in danger of breaking down. The leadership was gone at one stroke. The resources for the subsidizing of it were gone. What happened? A missionary—this time an

Englishman—Bishop Westcott, Bishop of Madras, the son of the Westcott forever famous in all Greek reading circles—took charge of the German mission, and went to the German leaders and said to them: “Brethren, do not be troubled. I will do the best I can. I will summon the men and the means as best I can to care for this mission of yours; and when this horrid war is over I propose to hand back this mission without the loss of a single member, if I can help it; and add to it as much as possible during that time.” There was a religion transcending all national bounds, racial hatreds, and every other human limitation. It was the spirit of universalism of the human family—no matter what complexion the racial character might take—that animated that beautiful Englishman in helping those beautiful Germans.

One more statement and I am through, for the time fails. What lesson, what *sequitur*, do I seek to draw from what I have just said? My brothers, no greater thought must hold its place in the midst of our thinking than this, that in this strange permissive providence of God, when we walk out of these doors we walk out to face a most troubled world, in what may in some regards be called the darkest hour in human history. And facing that fact, what of the situation in that great unevangelized heathen world

lying beyond the borders of Christendom, where there have hitherto been three great gospel burden-bearers? There have been three; and the three have been the German, the Briton, and the American. Of those three, alas! alas! two are locked in fratricidal strife. God forgive them both! They are destroying and crippling each other's energies, the very source of their strength, their vital young manhood being laid low by the hundreds of thousands, and their resources being crippled not only for to-day, but for many a long to-morrow. Now, in the midst of all that, one great gospel burden-bearer remains untouched. Tell me, why do you think this America of ours is untouched? By some great skill, here, there, some other place? No, no. Behind it all and beyond it all is the restraining purpose of the living God. God has kept one great reservoir for the refreshment of humanity, for the reinspiring of hope, for the reenforcement of courage, and for the possibilities of still carrying on a great world program for Christ.

In that strange providence, with its permissals and its restraints seeming to cross each other to perplex the human vision unless the human vision be reenforced by the deep trust of the heart, for when the head is perplexed, the heart can still say, "I know, I know"—in this strained hour it has pleased this great God of ours to take the

torch that enlightens humanity and put it into the hand of this, the youngest-born people of his family. And God calls in those striking accents that cannot but be heard by any listening ear to this generation, saying, "Children of God in America, to you I commit the high and holy task, the unspeakable privilege, of being the pathfinders for humanity, of leading a perplexed and troubled world to find the answer to all its perplexities and the enlightening of all its darkness, at the foot of the cross."

It is for you, American men and women, to rise to the full stature, to which God calls this generation in America, to accept his high and holy trust, and to say, with some hesitation, and yet with something of assurance, "Lord God, we accept the trust, and go to perform those labors which shall fulfill thy trust." Now, for what am I speaking? For a great program of foreign missions? Yes. But you cannot have a great program of foreign missions without a great amount of housecleaning right here at home. How can you have a great world program of an exalted Christ, if that Christ be not lived and illustrated? You cannot take to Peking a larger and better gospel than you are living in New York.

You cannot take to Madras or Calcutta a cleaner life than you are proving and illustrating in Chicago. I say to you, men and women—you

who call me a foreign missionary—that you cannot have a foreign missionary who does not have in the depths of him a deep, passionate desire, if he has any intelligence at all, for such a setting of the Christ-life in the hearts of his own people as will make it possible for him to go anywhere and say, "This is what Christ does among the peoples that receive him."

And therefore I call upon this Conference to pray, as I may be pardoned for saying, for no other man, for Dr. Forsyth, from Denver. The greatest task that Methodism has committed to the hands of any man to-day, is the task that you have committed to the hands of Dr. Forsyth. I would have you pray greatly for these men that lead in all these social service movements.

What does it mean? Simply the interpretation of Jesus Christ under the forms of social order. I would have you pray greatly for these Anti-Saloon League men. What does it mean? Simply the life of Christ, as illustrated in the habits of people called by his name. I would have you pray greatly for Clarence True Wilson, as well as P. A. Baker, and all the rest of them who are associated together in holding above all other things, this particular matter at this time.

That is to say, I am calling in the depths of me for a program of the unveiling of the Christ life into the very depths of the homeland in order

that we who go abroad may say, "This is the Christ, and this is his program, and they are the people that are proving that it is a possible program, and are illustrating it in life."

Brothers, this will mean for each of us personal holiness. It will mean for each of us a family life, sweet and pure and good and true, such as can be exported to the ends of the earth. It will mean for us a church life so sincere, so all pervaded with the Christ that it will be a joy to transport the humblest church of America and put it down before the eyes of the heathen world and say: "There, there, that is what Jesus Christ does. It means the cleansing of the city, the pervading of all life with the cleansing streams that flow from Calvary." Let us pray.

O Lord God, we stand before thee this closing day of the General Conference feeling, so that it bows us down, that thou hast committed into our hands at this time—as Americans, as Christians in America, as the Methodist Episcopal Church in the heart of the Christianity of America—the heaviest obligation, the highest privilege, the most exalted duty that has ever been put into the hands of mortal man since time began. And therefore, are we pressed down in spirit, and therefore out of the depths of our humbling we cry out to thee—O God! O God! who is sufficient

for such matters? None of us—the whole church of us, except—except, as humbling ourselves before thee we open the doors and all the avenues of access to our hearts and our lives and cry out, “Lord, pour upon us the enabling of the Holy Ghost.”

Grant that this church may during this quadrennium be peculiarly a church that shall be known for its eager desire for and its intense pursuit of the holiness of God to be found in heart and life in these circles that gather around the family, in the church, in the village, in the city, in the nation. O, preeminently may it be a four years in which Christ shall be manifestly interpreted in all the ways of life, that it may easily be seen that righteousness dwelleth within our borders, and that what we talk about to other lands is not unknown in its fullness and sweetness and purity in our own land.

To this end we pray that thou wouldest bless every pastor, particularly the men that are in difficult places, the men in the city, the men on the frontier, the men in the little village with more churches than is good for it—the men here, the men there, the men everywhere.

Bless the whole scheme of home missions. We pray thee that among the humble, the lowly, the unprivileged, the almost forgotten the new zeal of Methodism may carry the gospel down to

the deepest depths and out into the widest breadths.

Bless Brother Forsyth. Help him to get about him a body of men who shall understand, and who with him and those associated with him in the pastorates all over the land, may help to make this America the land of which the foreign missionary may speak with deep assurance that his words abroad are not contradicted by his church at home.

Bless the men that will scatter and go to the ends of the earth. God bless them! God bless them! And grant, we pray thee, that not only the individuals afar but the whole nation may take on its missionary task to a troubled world.

Restore peace. Grant that again order may obtain through this troubled planet, and the way of Jesus Christ be made a little more smooth, the rough paths be made a little more even through all the life of this world. We ask in Christ's name. Amen.





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